

Wabash Plain Dealer

TUESDAY
DECEMBER 10, 2019

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Shining light on Wabash County since 1859.



**Pulse
of Wabash**

**Wabash Plain Dealer's
new website
now available**

Check out our new website at www.wabash-plaindealer.com and let us know what you think. Stories older than a few weeks are not yet available but will be soon. If you had an account on our previous site, you will need to create a new account. If you registered with the same email address we will be able to locate your previous subscription as well. Once registered, you can also verify your subscription. Please contact web-support@wabashplaindealer.com with any questions. Thank you!

**Wabash Plain Dealer's
new office now open**

The Wabash Plain Dealer's new office is now open on the second floor at 99 W. Canal St.

**Choral concert
featuring Christmas
music planned**

A choral concert under the direction of Pastor Kent Harding, featuring classic traditional Christmas music will take place at 1 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 10, at the Living Well Winchester Center 239 Bond St.

**'The Polar Express'
to be shown at the
Honeywell Center**

"The Polar Express" will be shown at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 10 in the Honeywell Center's Ford Theater. The admission fee will be \$2 per person. Mike Almon acoustic guitar concert planned Come and listen to a variety of acoustic guitar music from noon to 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 11, at 35 E. Market St. Call 260-563-4475 for more information.

**Christmas at the
Museum Annual
Banquet planned**

On Wednesday, Dec. 11, the Wabash County Historical Museum, 36 E. Market St., will be hosting Christmas at the Museum Annual Banquet.

**'Paint Like Bob Ross'
at the NMPL**

Two "Paint Like Bob

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Harris announces candidacy



FILE PHOTO

POLITICS: Chad Harris was introduced to the Wabash County Democratic Party on Thursday, Feb. 18, 2016 as its new county chairman, taking the place of long-time chair Bryan McCallen, who stepped down after 31 years.

Wabash County Democratic Party chair to seek an Indiana DNC delegate slot

BY ROB BURGESS
rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com

Wabash County Democratic Party Chairman Chad Harris announced his candidacy Wednesday for one of the Indiana delegate slots at the Democratic National Convention (DNC) from July 13 to 16, 2020 in Milwaukee.

Harris has been involved in many local, and state campaigns since 1999. Harris has been a state delegate to the 2012, 2014, 2016 and 2018 state conventions.

In 2013, Harris was chosen to be a member of the Indiana Democratic Party's Emerging Leaders Project. He was one of only 40 people under 40 selected for the year-long training program.

In 2014, Harris ran unsuccessfully for Wabash County Council 2nd District seat.

Harris has been chairman of the Wabash County Democratic Party since February 2016.

"Over the next few months I plan to attend events and party meetings throughout

the 10-county 2nd congressional district to meet as many future state delegates as possible, as they will elect the DNC delegate at the state convention in June," stated Harris. "It has been a bucket list of mine to serve as a DNC delegate at a national convention since I was a very young, and 2020 seemed like a good year to try and make that happen. Wabash County will have nine delegates to the state convention in June."

In a phone interview with the Plain Dealer on Wednesday, Harris said he believed he was the first one in the district to announce their candidacy.

"I know there will be others running, I just don't think anyone (else) has announced," he said.

Harris said he thought there were about five candidates currently running in the Democratic presidential primary who were going to be viable by the time the primary election takes place May 5, 2020.

Harris said he did not see billionaires such as Tom Steyer and Mike Bloomberg as being on that list.

"They're in the race now. They'll be in the debate in December, but I don't think the billionaires can buy the nomination like they're trying to do. I think the Democratic voters see through that," he said.

Indiana's national convention delegation

Indiana will send 108 individuals to the 2020 DNC: 55 district-level delegates, 18 at-large delegates, nine party leaders and elected officials (PLEO) delegates, seven automatic delegates.

Also, the Indiana Democratic Party will also send six at-large alternate delegates, nine standing committee members, three pages and one delegation chair.

"Indiana is allotted 55 district-level delegates that are apportioned to the nine congressional districts based on the 2016 presidential and gubernatorial results in Indiana," stated Phil Johnson,

communications director of the Indiana Democratic Party, in response to a Plain Dealer request. "Those delegates will be allotted to specific presidential candidates based on the results of the 2020 primary election in those congressional districts. State convention delegates will vote on who will be the district-level delegates at the Indiana Democratic State Convention on June 13, 2020."

Johnson stated the additional members of the delegation will be allotted to specific presidential candidates based on the statewide results of the 2020 primary election.

"These delegates will be voted on by those that will be elected as district-level delegates," he stated.

Johnson stated Indiana has one fewer unpledged automatic delegate than in 2016, as Sen. Joe Donnelly lost his re-election bid in 2018.

"Also, following a rule

See **HARRIS** / Page A2

Francois selected as Schwarzman Scholar

**First from Haiti,
MU to be chosen
for fully-funded
graduate program
in global affairs**

BY ANNE GREGORY

Manchester University senior Gerald (Chris) Francois has been selected for the prestigious Schwarzman Scholars Program, the first person to be chosen for this honor from the Republic of Haiti and from the University in northeast Indiana.

One hundred forty-five Schwarzman Scholars were selected from more than 4,700 applicants from 41 countries and 108 universities.

Anchored in an 11-month professional master's degree in global affairs at Beijing's Tsinghua University, the fully-funded program provides scholars with the opportunity to develop their leadership skills, engage in high-level interactions with Chinese leaders and visiting speakers, and learn from world-class faculty.

Schwarzman Scholars experience extensive leadership training, practical training and internships, a

network of senior mentors, and travel seminars around China.

The Class of 2021 will enroll in August 2020.

These future leaders will join a global network of Schwarzman Scholars who have committed themselves to be a force for change, regardless of where their personal or professional passions take them.

"I am inspired by these remarkable, accomplished and dynamic young individuals who will be joining Schwarzman Scholars at a time when its mission is more important than ever," said Stephen A. Schwarzman, founding trustee of Schwarzman Scholars, in announcing the new class.

Majoring in peace studies at Manchester, Francois is co-founder and director of marketing of Delice Dental Health Initiative, a nonprofit that has worked since 2015 to improve access to quality dental care in rural and urban Haitian communities.

Francois is a student assistant at the Manchester University Peace Studies Institute, president of the Amnesty International chapter at MU, founding president and hub coordinator of Sunrise Manchester University, president of the International



PROVIDED PHOTO

HONOR: Manchester University senior Gerald (Chris) Francois has been selected for the prestigious Schwarzman Scholars Program, the first person to be chosen for this honor from the Republic of Haiti and from the University in northeast Indiana.

Association, secretary of the Alpha Mu Gamma Nu Gamma chapter and a resident assistant at Oakwood Hall.

"I am extremely thankful to professors Tara Beth Smithson, Janina P. Traxler and Katy Gray Brown, who have accompanied me throughout the process, helped me proofread my es-

says, and provided emotional support," Francois said, also thanking Leslie Marlatt and Sarah Aubrey from the MU Career and Professional Development staff.

Anne Gregory is the assistant director of media relations in the Office of Strategic Communications at Manchester University.

OJN Spanish program receives \$20K grant

**School's Dual
Language
Immersion Pilot
Program awarded
for third year**

BY ROB BURGESS
rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) announced Thursday additional grant recipients of the Indiana Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Program.

Due to the availability of additional funding, Indiana opened the second round of awards for the 2019-2020 school year.

One of those awards was \$20,000 for OJ Neighbours (OJN) Elementary School's Spanish program.

In response to a Plain Dealer request on Monday, Adam Baker, IDOE press secretary stated OJN has received the grant for each of the past three years. In the first two years they received \$50,000 each year, and this year they received \$20,000.

"Our team of reviewers use a rubric based heavily from the Center for Applied Linguistics Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education," stated Baker. "This grant helps schools provide professional development for teachers, to purchase instructional materials in the target language and to fund visas for

See **GRANT** / Page A3

First Day Hikes planned at Salamonie, Mississinewa

Staff Report

A pair of New Year's Day hikes have been planned for Mississinewa and Salamonie lakes, according to a series of press releases.

Salamonie Lake
Start the New Year off right with fresh air and renewed senses. Join Upper Wabash Interpretive Services' staff for a First Day Hike at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 1 at Salamonie Lake at 3691 New Holland Road, Andrews.

Meet at the interpretive center for a one-hour stroll through the woods along the moderate Tree Trail. Dress for the weather. Families and friendly dogs on leashes welcome. Advance registration is requested by calling 260-468-2127.

Mississinewa Lake

Empower your senses with an evening stroll at Mississinewa Lake. Join Upper Wabash Interpretive Services' staff for a First Day Hike at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 1 at 4673 S. 625 East, Peru.

Meet at Moswa Trailhead at Bostwick Pond located within Miami State Recreation Area and meander through the woods along the Moswa Trail. Plan to be on the trail an hour with S'mores served around a cozy fire afterward. Dress for the weather. Families and friendly dogs on leashes welcome. Advance registration is requested by calling 260-468-2127.

U.S. firms keep hiring, easing worries of weakening economy

BY CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — American businesses have complained for years that they can't find the workers they need to fill available jobs. November's robust hiring gain suggests that at least some have found a way to do so.

With the unemployment rate now at a half-century low of 3.5 percent, many economists have also warned that hiring would soon slow simply because there are fewer unemployed workers available.

That day may still come, but it didn't in November. Employers added 266,000 jobs last month, the most since January. Monthly hiring has, in fact, picked up since earlier this year: It averaged 205,000 for the past three months, up from a recent low of 135,000 in July.

Friday's jobs report largely squelched fears of a recession that had taken hold in the summer. Steady job growth has helped reassure consumers that the economy is expanding and that their jobs and incomes remain secure. That should boost spending and growth in the months ahead.

President Donald Trump seized on the strong jobs report as he tries to focus voters' attention on the state of the economy rather than the impeachment inquiry being led by House Democrats. The latest numbers also come as Trump's trade war with China had prompted companies to cut back on their investments in plants and industrial equipment, slowing growth.

"Without the horror show that is the Radical Left, Do Nothing Democrats, the Stock Markets and Economy would be even better, if that is possible, and the Border would be closed to the evil of Drugs, Gangs and all other problems! #2020," the president tweeted.

He returned to the report later Friday, tweeting: JOBS, JOBS, JOBS!"

Employers seemed to be shrugging off economic concerns, adding jobs at a solid clip. And other risks to the global economy, such as a disorderly Brexit for the U.K., have faded in the past month. Given all that, the economy could provide a boost for Trump in next year's election.

Investors cheered the report, sending the Dow

Jones industrial average up 340 points in afternoon trading.

The new job numbers were released as companies have been getting more creative about enticing workers as the ranks of the unemployed dwindle. Some are willing to hire people who are less qualified and train them, while others are raising pay to attract more applicants. Still others are offering flexible work schedules or have dropped some drug-testing requirements.

These efforts have lifted the proportion of Americans with jobs and lowered the unemployment rate by much more than many economists thought possible.

"Companies have somehow achieved continued success in luring job candidates," said Stephen Stanley, chief economist at Amherst Pierpont Securities.

Some recruiters have overhauled their approach to hiring and retention as the competition for workers has tightened. Beth Thress, vice president of human resources at a Cincinnati-based company that owns two senior living centers, said it became harder to retain nursing aides and housekeepers once such retailers as Walmart and Target increased their pay.

So Thress went to the board of Maple Knoll Communities, a nonprofit that employs 675 people, and won approval to raise starting pay. She also offered more flexible schedules and set up an emergency fund for employees.

"There's just a lot more competition, you've got to meet their needs in some form or fashion," she said. "It's been a real shift in mentality."

The changes are working so far, Thress said. The company has reduced turnover from about 40 percent in 2017 to just 8 percent so far this year.

Wages overall still aren't growing as quickly as they have in previous expansions, but there are signs of improvement. Average hourly pay for workers, excluding managers and supervisors, which covers about 80 percent of the workforce, rose 3.7 percent in November from a year ago. That's just a tick lower than October's figure, which was the highest since the recession.

The higher pay is coaxing workers off the sidelines and back into the job market. The proportion of Americans in their prime working years, aged 25 through 54, with a job was 80.3 percent last month, matching October's level as the highest since January 2007.

Companies are also offering bigger raises to entice potential candidates who are working elsewhere. People who switched jobs saw their pay rise 4.3 percent from a year earlier, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, the biggest gain since the recession and a full percentage point higher than the pay increase for those who stayed.

Becky Frankiewicz, president of Manpower Group North America, says her organization often tells its corporate clients to consider loosening their job listing criteria.

"We are counseling companies to look at the requirements they set for a job and ask if they are really mandatory or just nice to have," she said.

Frankiewicz pointed to the fact that nearly 90 percent of the technology jobs listed at Manpower require a college degree in computer science, but less than half the people working in the field have one.

Rebecca Hamilton, co-CEO of Badger Balm, a skincare company, said the firm's generous pay and benefits have made it easy to fill jobs, even though it is based in a small town of 700 near Keene, New Hampshire.

The 90-person company offers health and retirement benefits, but also an on-site gym, yoga classes and massages, and a free organic lunch every day.

"We don't have any trouble whatsoever finding really good, talented people," Hamilton said.

Still, it's not clear how long companies will be able to keep hiring at November's blowout pace. The fact that wages gains are accelerating suggests that companies aren't just luring in new workers, but fighting for a smaller pool of applicants.

"It's an indication that we are starting to reach the limits of the job market," said Joe Song, an economist at Bank of America Merrill Lynch.

HARRIS

Continued from A1

change by the Democratic National Committee, unpledged automatic delegates will not be allowed to vote on the first ballot to choose the party's presidential nominee at National Convention unless a candidate has already secured a majority of the convention using pledged delegates," he stated.

The process for becoming a national delegate

According to Adi Ben Yehoshua, data director for the Indiana Democratic Party, there is a five-step process for becoming a national delegate:

- Step 1: Pick who you wish to vote for in the presidential primary.
- National delegates must pledge support to one candidate when filling out their forms to become a delegate.
- "I would probably pledge myself with whoever won the congressional district," said Harris. "It happens to be (South Bend Mayor) Pete Buttigieg's congressional

district, so we'll see how that plays out."

- Step 2: Volunteer with the campaign.
- "Work with your candidate's campaign to boost their message in Indiana," stated Ben Yehoshua. "You can help your candidate collect petitions to get on the ballot, volunteer to make calls or knock on doors, donate to your favorite candidate, or any other organizing activities. The more votes they receive in the primary, the more delegates they will be allotted."
- A presidential candidate must receive at least 15 percent of the vote in each congressional district to be allotted any district-level delegates and 15 percent of the vote statewide to be allotted any at-large delegates.
- Step 3: File to become a national delegate.

Candidates may file to become a national delegate from 9 a.m. May 1, 2020 through noon June 1, 2020.

- Step 4: Campaign to be elected.
- All National Delegates will be selected on June 13, 2020 at the Indiana Democratic State Convention.
- "Only state delegates to the Indiana Democratic State Convention will be able to vote," stated Ben Yehoshua. "Spend the time leading up to the convention engaging with Democrats in your county, campaigning for yourself and fundraising to help you get to the convention."
- State delegates are either elected on the primary ballot or by appointment after the primary by the county chair if vacancies exist.
- Step 5: Head to Milwaukee.



Showtimes for Thursday, December 6- Thursday, December 12
All showtimes have Closed Captioning available.






Midway (PG13) Fri: 7:05, 10:05 Sat: 1:00, 4:10, 7:05, 10:05 Sun: 1:00, 4:10, 7:05 Mon- Thurs: 7:05	A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood (PG) Sat: 1:10, 4:05, 7:15, 10:00 Sun: 1:10, 4:05, 7:15 Mon- Thurs: 7:15
Knives Out (PG13) Fri: 6:45, 9:40 Sat: 12:50, 4:00, 6:45, 9:40 Sun: 12:50, 4:00, 6:45 Mon- Thurs: 6:45	Frozen II in 2D (PG) Fri: 6:55, 9:30 Sat: 1:20, 3:50, 6:55, 9:30 Sun: 1:20, 3:50, 6:55 Mon- Thurs: 6:55

Ford V Ferrari (PG13)
Fri: 6:35, 9:50 • Sat: 12:40, 3:40, 6:35, 9:50
Sun: 12:40, 3:40, 6:35 • Mon- Thurs: 6:35

For more information please call
765-460-5322
or visit us online at www.roxyperu.com
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5-Day Weather Summary

 Tuesday Partly Cloudy 26 / 17	 Wednesday Partly Cloudy 24 / 15	 Thursday Mostly Cloudy 31 / 23	 Friday Mostly Cloudy 41 / 31	 Saturday Rain & Snow Possible 40 / 30
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Sun and Moon

Today's sunset 5:20 p.m.
Tomorrow's sunrise 8:02 a.m.

 Full 12/12	 Last 12/18	 New 12/26	 First 1/2
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Detailed Local Outlook

Today we will see partly cloudy skies with a high temperature of 26°, humidity of 47%. West wind 10 to 17 mph. Expect mostly clear skies tonight with an overnight low of 17°. West wind 7 to 10 mph. The wind chill for tonight could reach 7°.

Having a Morton's neuroma is a pain in the foot

DEAR DOCTOR: I have Morton's neuroma in both feet, and my podiatrist has recommended surgery. I really don't want to have surgery, so I am desperately looking for another remedy. I read about a drug that was being fast-tracked by the FDA. Has it been approved yet?

Elizabeth Ko & Eve Glazier
Ask the Doctors



D E A R R E A D E R : Morton's neuroma is basically a pinched nerve in the ball of the foot, most often between the third and fourth toes. The nerve, which carries sensation from the toes, becomes swollen due to a benign growth. This allows the nerve to rub against, bump into or become trapped by the bones and connective tissues of the mid-foot. This results in sensations ranging from numbness, burning and tingling in the forefoot, the toes or both, all the way to outright – and sometimes significant – pain. Some people also experience swelling between the toes.

The cause for Morton's neuroma isn't fully understood. However, contributing factors include narrow shoes, which squeeze the toes; high-heeled shoes, which exponentially increase the pressure exerted on the ball of the foot; and damage to the nerve due to trauma, inflammation and illness. Biomechanical issues such as flat feet or high arches, which can lead to instability around the joints of the toes, are believed to play a role. Bunions or hammer toes are also considered to be risk factors for developing Morton's neuroma. The repeated stress associated with high-impact sports, such as running and basketball, can also give rise to a neuroma.

Some neuromas can be diagnosed with a physical exam to locate tenderness in the ball of the foot, or to identify a mass. Some people report a sensation of clicking between their toes. Imaging tests such as ultrasound can isolate tissue abnormalities associated with a neuroma. Although an X-ray won't diagnose the condition, it can rule out other potential causes, such as a stress fracture.

Treatment depends on the


severity of the condition. Many people find relief with a change of footwear. Flat-soled shoes with a roomy toe box and adequate padding beneath the ball of the foot can relieve pressure and protect the affected area. Custom shoe inserts, known as orthotics, can also offer relief. Some people require anti-inflammatory medications or cortisone injections to manage pain and inflammation. In severe cases, an outpatient surgery to remove the inflamed and enlarged nerve may be necessary.

The drug you're asking about, known as CNTX-4975, is being developed to address moderate and severe knee pain associated with osteoarthritis. It's an intriguing approach to pain management, which uses a laboratory-derived version of a sub-

stance called capsaicin, one of the compounds that give chili peppers their heat. The idea is that when delivered via an injection, the capsaicin will interfere with the neurological process that transmits pain signals to the brain.

You're correct that at one point, the drug was being considered for use in Morton's neuroma. However, the company developing the drug has decided to focus its use for knee pain due to osteoarthritis. Clinical trials of the drug are ongoing.

Eve Glazier, M.D., MBA, is an internist and associate professor of medicine at UCLA Health. Elizabeth Ko, M.D., is an internist and assistant professor of medicine at UCLA Health. Send your questions to askthe doctors@mednet.ucla.edu, or write: Ask the Doctors, c/o UCLA Health Sciences Media Relations, 10880 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1450, Los Angeles, CA, 90024. Owing to the volume of mail, personal replies cannot be provided.



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Linda Kelsay
Publisher
lkelsay@wabashplaindealer.com

Rob Burgess
Editor
rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com

Christi Kincade
Advertising Director
ckincade@wabashplaindealer.com

Talk to us

Main number 260-563-2131
Main fax 260-563-0816
Website www.wabashplaindealer.com

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**www.wabash
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A Holiday Invitation
Annual Christmas Cantata
First United Methodist Church
Sunday, Dec. 15 3 pm and 7 pm
Choir and orchestra with harp prelude 30 minutes prior
to each performance
Refreshments following.



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GRANT

Continued from A1

visiting teachers.”

The OJN program

According to Wabash City Schools (WCS), OJN students in the program are with one bilingual teacher who instructs half of the day in English and half of the day in Spanish. During the English-speaking part of the day, the teacher will teach English Language Arts (reading, writing and spelling), math, science and social studies to ensure understanding. During the Spanish-speaking part of the day, the teacher will teach Spanish literacy and will reteach the math, science, and social studies concepts again in Spanish.

“Dual language immersion offers a rich bilingual experience for young language learners when their minds are developmentally best able to acquire a second language,” according to the WCS.

During the Spanish-speaking part of the day, the teacher will only speak in Spanish and will only answer students in Spanish as well. The teacher will communicate through pictures, songs, games, body language and expressions to help students comprehend what is being said.

“Children at this age are

very adaptable and can pick up on the meaning in language when these strategies are used. Students will also be asked to speak only in Spanish during the Spanish-speaking part of the day after a brief period at the beginning of the year to encourage them to begin using the language to communicate as well,” according to the WCS.

Parents interested in having their student participate in the Dual Immersion classroom can complete an application in the OJN office. Applications are open to all students entering pre-kindergarten.

The DLI Program

The DLI Program distributes financial assistance to school corporations or charter schools for either the establishment of new programs or the introduction of new languages within existing programs. DLI programs must begin in kindergarten or first grade and use an instructional model that provides at least 50 percent of its instruction in a target language, with the remaining instructional time in English. In total, 10 schools received awards to continue existing programs, with one school receiving funding to begin a new language program.

“Schools must submit data to IDOE at the end of each school year. Schools evaluate

students’ progress in math and language arts, in addition to progress in the target language. Factors such as attendance, parent involvement and student engagement are also considered as research has shown these increase with well-implemented programs,” stated Baker.

Baker stated the Indiana legislature enacted Senate Enrolled Act 267, which provided an appropriation for the Department of Education, with the approval of the State Board, to establish and maintain a DLI Pilot Program to provide grants to school corporations and charter schools that establish dual language immersion programs in Chinese, Spanish, French or any other language approved by the department.

Other schools also awarded

The following list of other school corporations and the corresponding elementary schools besides OJN that have been selected through a competitive grant process to receive funding to begin or continue a dual language immersion program.

The schools are listed by the corporation, school name (or schools’ names), language and award amount:

■ Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation,

Clifty Creek Elementary, Spanish, \$20,000.

■ Batesville Community School Corporation, Batesville Primary School, Mandarin, \$20,000.

■ Logansport Community School Corporation, Landis Elementary School, Spanish, \$20,000.

■ Monroe County Community School Corporation, Summit Elementary and Clear Creek Elementary, Spanish, \$37,000.

■ MSD of Lawrence Township, Harrison Hill Elementary, Indian Creek Elementary, Mary Castle Elementary, Skiles Test Elementary, Sunnyside Elementary, Spanish, \$50,000.

■ MSD of Warren Township, Pleasant Run Elementary School, Spanish, \$20,000.

■ Muncie Community Schools, West View Elementary School, Spanish, \$20,000.

■ South Bend Community School Corporation, Clay International Academy, French, \$50,000. (This school is receiving DLI funding to begin a new language program.)

■ Warsaw Community Schools, Eisenhower Elementary School and Leesburg Elementary School, Spanish, \$20,000.

■ West Noble School Corporation, West Noble Primary School, Spanish, \$20,000.

Low Impact Fitness classes scheduled

Fitness that is both fun and free led by Mary Jo McClelland at 9:45 a.m. every Monday and Thursday, and 3 p.m. Wednesdays at Living Well Winchester Center, 239 Bond St. There is no fee or registration required.

Cancer care advocate available every Tuesday

A cancer care advocate is available from 1 to 4 p.m. every Tuesday at the Winchester Senior Center, 239 Bond St. No appointment is needed. This service is supported by the Hope Foundation and provided by Cancer Services out of Fort Wayne.

Yoga classes scheduled on Tuesdays

Yoga for those who are intermediate to experienced levels have been scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Tuesdays at the Living Well Winchester Center, 239 Bond St. The cost is \$10, and discount passes are available.

Red Cross blood donation opportunity set for Dec. 27

The Red Cross has scheduled a blood donation opportunity from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, Dec. 27, at Parkview Wabash Hospital, 10 John Kissinger Drive.

January Salamonie Senior Luncheon set

The monthly Salamonie Senior Luncheon will be held at noon Monday, Jan. 6, 2020 at the Salamonie Lake Interpretive Center, 3691 New Holland Road, Andrews. Anyone age 50 or older is welcome to attend. The program begins with a carry-in meal at noon. Potato soup will be provided. Guests should bring a side dish to share, a beverage and their table service. A \$1 donation will be accepted. Reservations may be made by calling 260-468-2127.

Editor’s note: If you have an upcoming event to submit, please send it by email to news@wabashplainedealer.com no later than five days before the event itself. Please use complete sentences, Associated Press style and Microsoft Word or PDF file formats.

PULSE

Continued from A1

Ross” classes are scheduled in December at the North Manchester Public Library (NMPL). The first, “Seasons Greetings,” will take place from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 11. The second, another “Poinsettias” session, will take place from 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 14. This class requires registration and a \$20 materials fee upon registering. Space is limited. Register at the front desk or call 260-982-4773.

Downtown businesses to extend hours on select dates

Participating shops will be open until 7 p.m. on the following dates: Dec. 12, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20 and 21.

Red Cross blood donation opportunity set for Dec. 12

The Red Cross has scheduled a blood donation opportunity from noon to 6 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 12, at the Manchester Church of the Brethren, 1306 Beckley St., North Manchester.

Charley Creek Gardens to host 10th Annual Yule Time Stroll

Charley Creek Gardens will host its 10th Annual Yule Time Stroll, open to the public from 6 to 9 p.m. Friday, Dec. 13 to Monday, Dec. 23 at 551 N. Miami St. This event is free and open to the public. Parking is available at 518 N. Wabash St.

Fairy House Workshop set for Dec. 14

The program will be held from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Dec. 14 at the Salamonie Interpretive Center at Salamonie Lake, 3691 New Holland Road, Andrews. The cost is \$5 per person payable day of the event. Materials will be provided, with extra materials available for purchase. Advanced registration is required by calling 260-468-2127. Limited

space is available. The suggested age for the program is 10 and above, and those under 18 should be accompanied by an adult.

LaFontaine Lions to host Santa Breakfast

The LaFontaine Lions will host a Santa Breakfast from 7:30 to 10 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 14 at the LaFontaine Community Building. The menu will include scrambled eggs, pancakes, sausage, sausage gravy, biscuit, juice, milk and coffee. Santa arrives at 9 a.m. There will be a free-will donation. Proceeds will go towards the LaFontaine United Methodist Church food pantry. Please bring in non-perishable foods. Donations of old glasses and keys will also be accepted.

Christmas concert planned for Dec. 15

A Christmas concert featuring the Wabash sixth grade chorus has been planned from 1 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 15 at the Living Well Winchester Center, 239 Bond St. To enjoy the sounds of the season, register by calling 260-563-4475.

‘White Christmas’ to be shown at the Honeywell Center

“White Christmas” will be shown at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 17 in the Honeywell Center’s Ford Theater. The admission fee will be \$2 per person.

‘Ask a Teenager’ tech basics event planned

Bring your electronic devices and your questions, assistance provided by Heartland Career Center Tech students at 1 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 17 at the Living Well Winchester Center, 239 Bond St. Sign-up is requested by calling 260-563-4475.

Red Cross blood donation opportunity set for Dec. 17

The Red Cross has scheduled a blood donation opportunity from 11 a.m. to

5 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 17, at the First United Methodist Church, 110 N. Cass St.

Census job opportunities to be discussed

The U.S. Census Bureau has planned a presentation at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 18 at the Living Well Downtown, 35 E. Market St. to present upcoming census job opportunities. Register for this event by calling 260-563-4475.

Celebrate ‘The Wonders of Winter’ on Dec. 18

Preschool-age children and their adults are invited to Salamonie Preschool’s “The Wonders of Winter” from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 18 at Salamonie Interpretive Center in Lost Bridge West State Recreation Area, 3691 New Holland Road, Andrews. The program fee is \$2 per child. Advance registration is appreciated. Register by calling Upper Wabash Interpretive Services at 260-468-2127. For more information on other UWIS programs, visit dnr.IN.gov/uwis or facebook.com/upperwabash.

DivorceCare presents ‘Surviving the Holidays’ series

The DivorceCare support group, which meets at 6:30 p.m. every Tuesday in Room 112 in the Wabash Friends Church, 3563 South State Road 13, will be offering a DVD series “Surviving the Holidays” through Tuesday, Dec. 17. Group leader and members of the group meet for dinner at 5:30 p.m. at Subway, 1812 S. Wabash St., on State Road 15. For more information, call 260-563-8453, 877-350-1658 or group leader Janet Quillen at 260-571-5235; email office@wabashfriends.org; or visit www.divorcecare.org.

Breakfast with Santa planned

On Saturday, Dec. 21, Santa will be coming to Breakfast with Santa and will have a special treat for children at the Wabash County Historical Museum, 36 E. Market St.

John Edward Friend

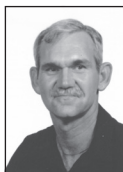
Aug. 7, 1946 - Dec. 7, 2019



John Edward Friend, 73, of Wabash, Indiana, died at 9:10 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019 at Autumn Ridge Rehabilitation Center in Wabash. He was born Aug. 7, 1946 in Jonesboro, Arkansas to John Earl Friend and Ruby (Purnell) Thompson.

John was a 1964 graduate of Wabash High School. He retired from the US Army, and served in Vietnam. He also worked at Wabash Metal Products. John attended the Christian Heritage Church. He enjoyed playing poker with the guys, fishing, playing golf, riding his motorcycle, and restoring his Chevy Nova.

He is survived by 3 children, Tonya Friend (Gary Holt) House of Pleasant View, Tennessee, John Edward Friend II of Bon Aqua, Tennessee, and Harold (Michelle) Krieg of Lagro, Indiana, 4 grandchildren, Cassie House of Ashland City, Tennessee, Buster (Coco) Hines and Tyler Krieg, both of



Greenbrier, Arkansas, and Kayla Krieg of Van Buren, Arkansas, great-grandson, Noah Hines of Greenbrier, Arkansas, and 2 sisters, Wanda (Joe)

Campbell of Wabash, and Diann Carson of Henderson, Tennessee, and his longtime companion, Beverly Ann Adams of Wabash. He was preceded in death by his parents, 2 brothers, Ruben Friend and David Friend, and his sister, Louise Howard.

Graveside services and burial will be 9:30 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 14, 2019 at Friends Cemetery, Wabash, with Pastor Tim Prater officiating. Friends may call 4 - 7 p.m. Friday, at Grandstaff-Hentgen Funeral Service, 1241 Manchester Avenue, Wabash.

Preferred memorials are the Wabash V.F.W. Post 286 or the Animal Shelter of Wabash County.

The memorial guest book for John may be signed at www.grandstaff-hentgen.com.

Jesse James Little

Funeral services for Jesse James Little, 89 of rural Roann, will be 10:30 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 12, 2019 at Grandstaff-Hentgen Funeral Service, Wabash. Burial in Falls Cemetery, Wabash. Visitation is 9 - 10:30 a.m. Thursday.

Robert E. ‘Bob’ Garner

Services for Robert E. “Bob” Garner are 11 a.m. Friday, at Grandstaff-Hentgen Funeral Service, Wabash, with visitation 9:30 - 11 a.m. Burial in Friends Cemetery, Wabash.

Ronald ‘Ron’ Eugene Rife

Memorial services Ronald “Ron” Eugene Rife will be 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 14, 2019 at the Wabash Chapel Church of God, Wabash, with visitation 2 - 4 p.m. Saturday. Arrangements by Grandstaff-Hentgen Funeral Service, Wabash.

Roderick ‘Rod’ Winters

Funeral services for Roderick “Rod” Winters, 67, formerly of Roann, Indiana were 11 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019 at the Roann United Methodist Church. Pastor Wayne Balmer officiated and Connie Doud was the musician. Memories were shared by his family and

friends. Burial was in Roann Community Cemetery, and the pallbearers were Robert “Bud” Winters, Nick Winters, Derrick Winters, Perry R. VanMeter, Brandon VanMeter and Josh VanMeter. Arrangements by Grandstaff-Hentgen Funeral Service, Roann.

Beverley Kay Hiner

Funeral Services for Beverley Kay Hiner, 79, of Wabash, were 1 p.m., Friday, Dec. 6, 2019 at Grandstaff-Hentgen Funeral Service, Wabash. David Phillips officiated, Phyllis Price was the pianist. Memories were shared by Tonya Kay Smith (daughter),

Carole Hiner (daughter-in-law), Terry L. Smith (son-in-law), and family and friends. Burial was in Falls Cemetery, Wabash. Pallbearers were Andrew J. Campbell, Terry L. Smith, Michael L. Hopkins, Travis Patton, Aidan Patton and Thom Hiner.

Bloomington council member starts Indiana congressional race

BLOOMINGTON (AP) — A longtime Bloomington City Council member is looking to challenge Republican Rep. Trey Hollingsworth for a southern Indiana congressional seat next year.

Democrat Andy Ruff announced his campaign Monday for the party’s 9th District nomination in next May’s primary.

Ruff is ending 20 years as an at-large member of the Bloomington council after he lost in last spring’s Democratic primary while seeking a sixth term. Ruff is an academic adviser at Indiana University and previously was a staffer with former Democratic U.S. Rep. Baron Hill.

Hollingsworth, the son of a Tennessee business mo-

gul, had moved to the district in 2015, shortly before launching his first congressional campaign. Hollingsworth faced accusation of buying a seat in Congress as he cleared a crowded 2016 GOP primary field with \$3 million he loaned his campaign and attack ads run by a super PAC financed with about \$1 million from his father.

Hollingsworth won reelection in 2018 with 56 percent of the vote even as Democratic nominee Liz Watson spent \$2.5 million on her campaign.

The 9th District stretches from the Ohio River near Louisville, Kentucky, to the southern Indianapolis suburbs.

speak up

How to contact your legislators:

U.S. Sen. Todd Young, R-Ind.
B33 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
1-202-224-5623
http://coats.senate.gov/contact

U.S. Sen. Mike Braun, R-Ind.
B85 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-4814
http://braun.senate.gov/

U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski R-District 2
419 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-3915

State Sen. Andy Zay, R-District 17
Indiana Senate
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204
1-800-382-9467
Senator.Zay@iga.in.gov

State Rep. David Wolkins, R-District 18
Indiana House
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204
1-800-382-9841
h18@in.gov

letters guidelines

The Wabash Plain Dealer encourages your letters to the editor forum, which is designed to be a forum for exchange of ideas between readers about issues of community importance.

Please sign your letter. Your name will be used with the letter that is published in the Plain Dealer. Your letter will be returned if it is your desire to remain anonymous.

Since we may want to write or call you to verify the letter, we ask that you include your address and telephone number. All our letters to the editor are published in the interest of fair play, so we trust our letter writers will refrain from personal attacks on other persons or groups.

A letter should be less than two pages long, preferably of double-spaced typing.

In order to give everyone an opportunity to participate in this exchange of ideas, please try to limit your letters to one per month per household.

To submit a letter, please write the Wabash Plain Dealer at 123 W. Canal St., Wabash, IN 46992.

Letters also may be hand-delivered to the newspaper office, 123 W. Canal St. The office is open 9-11:30 a.m. and 1-4 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you should deliver a letter during non-business hours, a drop slot is located to the left of the front door. Letters may be faxed to 260-563-0816, or email them to news@wabashplaindealer.com with "Letters to the Editor" in the subject line.

inspiration corner

Daily scripture

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.

Philippians 4:4

Democrats should not give up the fight to hear from more witnesses

Democrats and Republicans on the House Intelligence Committee have released competing accounts of the more than 100 hours of testimony collected from 17 witnesses in the impeachment inquiry into President Trump's actions on Ukraine. They are starkly and revealingly at odds.

The Democratic version closely relies on the testimony to describe a "months-long effort by President Trump to use the powers of his office to solicit foreign interference on behalf of his 2020 election." During a phone conversation with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, Mr. Trump explicitly asked for an investigation of a Moscow-concocted lie that Ukraine rather than Russia hacked the Democratic National Committee in 2016, as well as for a probe of former vice president Joe Biden.

Mr. Trump's personal lawyer, Rudolph W. Giuliani, then repeatedly demanded that U.S. diplomats extract a public statement from Mr. Zelensky promising those investigations. Gordon Sondland, an ambassador appointed by Mr. Trump who spoke to the president repeatedly about the matter, testified that his conclusion that military aid to Ukraine was conditioned on Mr. Zelensky's compliance was "as

clear as 'two plus two equals four.'"

The account has some gaps, but they are the direct result of the White House's interference, which prevented the testimony of a dozen present or former senior officials and the release of documents by the White House, the Office of Management and Budget, and three Cabinet departments. The report rightly warns that "this unprecedented campaign of obstruction" poses a serious threat to U.S. democracy: "The damage to our system of checks and balances ... will be long-lasting and potentially irrevocable if the President's ability to stonewall Congress goes unchecked."

The Republican account could not be more different. It brazenly reiterates proven falsehoods and conspiracy theories that the U.S. intelligence community has identified as Russian disinformation. It claims that Mr. Trump was genuinely concerned about Ukrainian corruption, even though he never raised it with Mr. Zelensky, and that he was only "prudent" in holding up military aid for "a thoughtful review," even though the hold continued long after an interagency study unanimously recommended that the aid be released.

The Democratic report lacks di-

rect testimony of Mr. Trump confirming the quid pro quo he was demanding, though it cites a public statement by acting White House chief of staff Mick Mulvaney to that effect. It also acknowledges "unanswered questions." Among other matters, there are disturbing indications that Mr. Trump may have successfully extorted the previous Ukrainian government. While saying the intelligence committee's investigation will continue, the Democrats argue that they are unable to wait to refer the impeachment case to the Judiciary Committee because of the "threat of further presidential attempts to solicit foreign interference in our next election."

While that fear is not unwarranted, the speedy referral smacks of political expediency. The Judiciary Committee may well have enough evidence to draw up articles of impeachment. But the witnesses and documents that Mr. Trump is improperly blocking might well provide a fuller and, to many Americans, more persuasive picture of his guilt – and American democracy cannot afford for Congress to fail to establish its right to obtain them. The fight for them must not be given up.

This editorial was first published in The Washington Post.

Who stole Donald Trump's body?

Watching President Trump in conversations last Tuesday with French President Emmanuel Macron and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau caused a moment of cognitive dissonance.

Could this be our Donald Trump speaking?

Setting aside whether one agreed with his remarks, the president was well-spoken, reasonably informed, confident without being abrasive, and, if I may say so, a perfectly acceptable human being. OK, I spit out my coffee as I wrote that, but my relief was palpable, as was my longing for that person to continue occupying the president's body.

Such encomiums, of course, result from a very low bar. Trump's grown-up performance brought pause precisely because of its contrast to what we're accustomed to. The disparity was so jarring, in fact, that it made me angry. How dare he not behave appropriately every day, not just when he's in the mood. Surely he owes America that much.

Instead, he's a one-man wrecking ball on decency and civility. To wit: His appalling performance at a recent rally in Minneapolis, where he acted out an imagined, sexually exciting telephone conversation between two former FBI agents.

Now that I have your attention, a short note on style versus substance. Some readers will think, who cares how he behaves? Trump supporters have long admonished us to ignore what he says and focus on what he does. To others, Trump is simply an entertainer who also happens to be president and who, apparently, thinks he's a comedian. But, one can be too funny for one's own good, which holds especially true if you're commander in chief and your-own-good extends to about 330 million other people.

Trump's style, indeed, is his own worst enemy – and one of the single greatest reasons so many despise him. His presidency often feels like a sustained whoopee cushion or a boutonniere's squirt in the eye. Critics can't take him seriously because, surely, he can't be serious. A clown speaking about tariffs is still a clown.

I would argue that style and substance are complementary coequals in matters of import. It isn't tenable that Trump act any ol' way and expect trust and respect in return. Nor am I convinced that his political base would dissolve without his antics. How does his mimicry of a reporter with disabilities elevate his followers to make America great again? How does his heavy-breathing mockery of the two former agents enhance their aspirations?

Lisa Page, the female half of the FBI duo, has suffered silently for almost two years as President Trump has repeatedly attacked her, mostly via Twitter. She broke her silence this week with Molly Jong-Fast of The Daily Beast, saying that Trump's "fake orgasm" was the final straw. We can debate what it sounded like, but I wouldn't want my grandchildren to witness it.

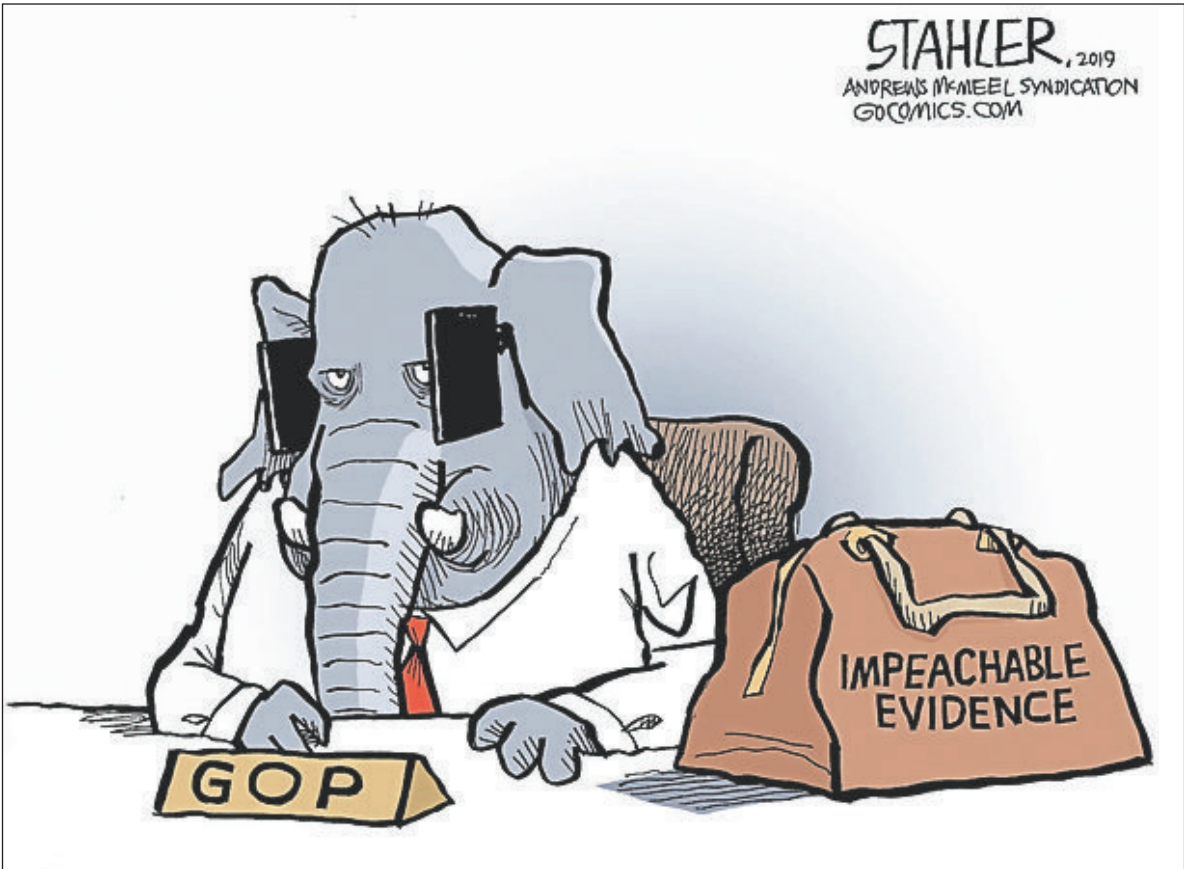
As backstory, Page and Peter Strzok had an extramarital affair while working at the agency and exchanged text messages that were leaked, exposing both the romance and their mutual dislike of Trump. Both had been working on investigations of Hillary Clinton's emails and Russian interference in the 2016 election.

Trump owes Page and Strzok a thank-you note rather than a salacious stream of attacks. Their text messages were a gift that allowed him to claim bias and accelerate his campaign of distrust in America's security institutions. The president was undeterred by subsequent findings that, though the two were way out of bounds, their opinions did not constitute bias in their work.

Cynics may point to Page's timing and her likely inclusion in an imminent report from the Justice Department's inspector general. But she has every right to object to the president's indefensible stalking. The question is, why isn't the sound of outrage deafening? How is it possible that Republicans condone such behavior with their silence?

The answer isn't only that Trump otherwise pleases them. It is that, as a society, we've become inured to outrage by its constancy. We swim, steep and marinate in rudeness, coarseness, foul-language and lurid behavior. President Trump could have been a leader but chose to seek attention instead. He, not the media, is the true enemy of the people – at least the decent ones.

Kathleen Parker



The recovery has not been kind to Indiana

I deliver my annual forecast later this week, so let's review where we have come as an economy since the end of the Great Recession. The news is far more dismal than I prefer, but it is wise to know where we are coming from before discussing our future.

The Great Recession was deep and long. It stretched from December 2007 to June 2009, over which time U.S. employment declined by 5.2 percent. Indiana saw a deeper decline, with job losses accounting for 7.4 percent of our workers. Indiana actually fared better than should've been expected over this time. About half of recession losses to production occurred in consumer durable and business plant and equipment. As the nation's most manufacturing-intensive state, we had to expect much higher job losses than a state like Florida, Virginia or California. We did, but the unemployment rate peaked well beneath the 1982 level, which is much lower than anticipated.

In 2011, I co-authored a study comparing Michigan and Indiana through the Great Recession. At its peak, I reported the unemployment rate in Michigan was a full 4.5 percent higher. Much of the difference was attributable to plant closures that were more concentrated in Michigan than in Indiana. I believe Indiana's tax reforms, focus on fiscal solvency and more predictable business environment helped us weather the Great Recession.

This is good news so far, but states and regions with more

volatile business sectors experience deeper recessions and more robust recoveries. So, from 2009 to today, Indiana should have enjoyed a far more robust economic recovery. In fact, the opposite occurred. From 2009 to the present, Indiana has underperformed the nation by growing jobs and GDP more slowly. Taking into account the Great Recession and the longest economic recovery in U.S. history, Indiana has created jobs at barely over half the rate of the nation as a whole.

This is a surprising and worrisome trend that was not fully apparent until after 2015 as the economic rebound faded in Indiana. But, no matter when we look at data, from either just before or just after the Great Recession through today, Indiana's economic picture compares poorly to the nation as a whole.

Job creation in our state is not just low relative to the nation as a whole, the composition of jobs is decidedly inferior to the national average. As I've noted before, more than 8 in 10 net new jobs nationwide have gone to workers with a college degree. The remaining 2 out of 10 jobs have gone to those with some college or an associate's degree. The U.S. simply is not creating jobs for workers who haven't been to college.

The Indiana story is different. The single largest educational category of job growth since the start of the Great Recession has been workers without a high school diploma. Instead of 8 of 10 jobs going to college graduates, Indiana has fewer jobs for college graduates than we did in 2007. This lack of job growth and compositional change in employment means Indiana's economy is weakening over time.

Of course, there are skeptics of these employment data. Many argue they cannot find a plumber or sufficient truck drivers for their business, while college graduates are plentiful. I'm sorry, but labor markets, who have reason to know better, disagree. Wages for college graduates have continued to grow since 2010, but not for others. Were college graduates flooding lower-skilled occupations, this would not be occurring. There are other corroborating data.

GDP growth nationally has been almost twice as great since the start of the Great Recession as it has been in Indiana. Hoosier productivity growth is slower across all sectors, and Indiana's long-term shift away from the national average on wages has continued. There seems to be very little official realization of these facts, particularly in the way we fund education and workforce development. Earlier this week, the state unveiling a program to increase training dollars on occupations that are declining in number, and which pay wages lower than they did in the Clinton Administration. It is flabbergasting. In virtually every meaningful respect, Indiana's recovery from the Great Recession has been a disappointment. It is time to have a cogent, well-informed debate about how to move forward. To do otherwise is to accept an unrelentingly stagnant status quo.

Michael J. Hicks, PhD, is the director of the Center for Business and Economic Research and the George and Frances Ball distinguished professor of economics in the Miller College of Business at Ball State University. Hicks earned doctoral and master's degrees in economics from the University of Tennessee and a bachelor's degree in economics from Virginia Military Institute. He has authored two books and more than 60 scholarly works focusing on state and local public policy, including tax and expenditure policy and the impact of Wal-Mart on local economies.



How an adult with no credit history boosted her credit score to 743 in just three months

While I generally discourage young adults from using credit, at some point they do need to prove they can manage debt.

The widely used FICO credit score, which is derived from information in your credit file, ranges from a low of 300 to a high of 850. Your score – along with other financial factors – directly affects how much interest you pay for the money you borrow. Your score also influences your insurance rates as well as your ability to get an apartment or even a job.

But how do you show a lender that you can manage debt well if, to get credit, you have to have a positive credit history? That’s what one reader wanted to know.

“My child graduated college, moved home, got a good job, opened a bank account at a small local bank with direct deposit, and then applied for a credit card at a large national bank,” the reader wrote during one of my recent online discussions. “The bank turned (my child) down, however, saying, ‘the credit reporting agency serving your area has reported no credit history for you.’ What does a new graduate need to do to establish a minimal history sufficient to get a credit card?”

It might surprise you, but it doesn’t take very long to establish good credit. So, there’s no need to panic that your teen or young adult child doesn’t yet have good credit.

Why does a high school student need a credit card? Will she be renting an apartment or getting a car loan in the next few years?

If you plan it right, you can help your child build a good credit profile just in time to qualify for a loan or lease starting out as a young adult without needing a co-signer.

As our eldest was getting close to graduating from college, we made her an authorized user on our credit card. This tactic is called “piggy-backing.”

The point is to let the authorized user benefit from the positive credit history of the primary cardholder. However, you should be aware that the person piggy-backing on your good name isn’t liable for paying any of the charges he or she makes on the card. So be extremely careful about using this method.

After about a year of being an authorized user, we had our daughter apply for a general-purpose credit card.

She was turned down because her income was too low. She’s working at an internship with a small monthly stipend. But we just wanted her to test if our credit history alone was enough to get her approved.

Having been rejected, she then applied for a secured credit card, which is backed by money deposited into a savings account. For example, if the required deposit is \$200, that becomes your credit limit.

If the young adult already has a banking or credit union account, start the search for a secured card at that institution. Bankrate.com regularly profiles the top secured card offers. On its list of best secured cards for 2019 are several credit cards with no annual fees, and most only require a deposit of \$200.

Shop around to avoid cards with high fees, and make sure the issuer is reporting to all three credit bureaus – Experian, Equifax and TransUnion. Don’t worry too

much about the interest rate, because the balance should be paid off every month.

Our daughter was approved for a secured card from her credit union with a \$250 limit.

The next two steps are crucial: We told her to only make small-dollar purchases and to pay the entire balance off before the due date every month.

The two biggest factors to getting and keeping a good credit score are paying your bills on time and keeping your debts low or paying them off completely. Analysis has shown that consumers with FICO scores over 800 use an average of just 7 percent of their available credit.

Our daughter got her secured card in May and made a \$27.95 purchase for gas. She used the card a second time in July to charge \$15 for the Metro.

“I paid off the balance as soon as the charge posted,” she said.

With no credit history of her own other than the boost from being an authorized user when she applied for the secured card, her credit score was 698, which is pretty good.

After just two charges and three months, her credit score increased to 737. So, she stopped using credit.

When she last checked, her score had jumped to 743.

Mission accomplished. She has established that she can handle debt.

Readers can write to Michelle Singletary c/o The Washington Post, 1301 K St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20071. Her email address is michelle.singletary@washpost.com. Follow her on Twitter (@SingletaryM) or Facebook (www.facebook.com/MichelleSingletary). Comments and questions are welcome, but due to the volume of mail, personal responses may not be possible. Please also note comments or questions may be used in a future column, with the writer’s name, unless a specific request to do otherwise is indicated.



Michelle Singletary

Busting your food budget? Here’s how much you should spend on groceries

BY MICHELLE SINGLETARY

It’s easy to justify overspending on food. You have to eat.

But I find a lot of families are spending too much at the grocery store and eating out.

“Is there a percentage considered normal for spending on a food and beverage?” a reader asked during a recent online discussion. “To me it is a big budget buster. We spend about 30 percent of our take-home pay (after tax and savings) on food, which I think is way too much, but my husband thinks is OK.”

In 2018, Americans spent an average of 9.7 percent of their disposable personal incomes on food – divided between food at home (5 percent) and away from home (4.7 percent), according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Disposable personal income refers to how much money consumers have left after taxes and any other mandatory withholdings are deducted from their paychecks.

Without knowing the size of the reader’s family and their income, I can’t say with certainty that their 30 percent spending for food and beverages is too high. Although, I suspect that it might be.

Last year, households in the lowest income quintile spent an average of \$4,109 on food, representing 35.1 percent of income, according to the USDA. Households in the highest income quintile spent an average of \$13,348 on food, representing 8.2 percent of income.

“As their incomes rise, households spend more money on food, but it represents a smaller overall budget share,” the USDA

says.

Families with higher household incomes – more than enough for their needs – should be examining whether they are spending too much on food, including at the grocery store.

This is where I often butt heads with people and their budgets. Eating out they get. It’s a luxury. Yet, they can’t see that they are also wasting money at the supermarket because it’s not seen as an overindulgence. They dismiss the fact that their shopping list only had staples such as milk, eggs and bread – even though they came out with bags of other items they didn’t need. (One easy way to trim your grocery costs: Don’t shop when you’re hungry.)

If you want to determine if you’re overspending at the supermarket, the USDA provides a useful weekly and monthly guideline. Go to usda.gov and search for “Cost of Food Reports.”

The food plans, which are put out every month, are broken down into four categories of spending: thrifty, low-cost, moderate-cost and liberal. The USDA lists average food costs for a nutritious diet of meals and snacks prepared at home, based on gender and age.

Let’s say you’re a family of five. This includes two adults (the husband and wife are in their 40s) and three children, ages 2, 10 and 12. On a low-cost plan, the average monthly food expenditure for this family would be \$1,037.20. Here’s how the costs are broken down on an individual basis in the latest USDA food report:

- Male adult: \$242.60
- Female adult: \$210.50
- 12-year-old boy: \$240.70
- 10-year-old girl: \$208.90
- 2-year-old boy: \$134.50

But let’s say you’re on a liberal plan. The monthly cost would jump to \$1,570 for the family.

Of course this is average spending, so you would adjust your spending according to the needs of your family and any dietary restrictions. Still, assess whether your spending is way out of line.

Food is always one of the hardest areas to trim in a household budget. In my experience, people make a lot of excuses for excess spending in this area. And eating out is the biggest culprit of budget busting.

In 2018, food away from home accounted for 54.4 percent of total food expenditures, according to the USDA.

Think of budget percentage guidelines as you might the recommendations for how many calories you should consume per day. The total number of calories a person needs depends on a number of factors, such as age, weight and level of physical activity.

If you want to lose or gain weight, you adjust the calories consumed.

The same goes with your budget. Set percentage goals for various expense categories to either save more or lose the debt that is consuming so much of your income. You may even need to do both – save and reduce debt.

Yes, you have to eat. But don’t let this basic need bust your budget. If you’re not watching your spending in this area, you could be eating your wealth away.

Lutheran Health Physicians encourages maximizing health plan benefits

STAFF REPORT

During the fall and winter months, it’s easy to get caught up in holiday planning and forget to take advantage of your insurance benefits. Every fall, individuals should direct their attention to outstanding healthcare needs and take full advantage of paid-up deductibles or available funds in Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs).

“In considering their healthcare needs, people also should consider the best strategy for using their available health insurance plan benefits,” stated Nicole Rexroth, chief operating officer, Lutheran Health Physicians, in a press release. “Now is the time to take advantage of unused benefits to complete outstanding treatments or recommended tests or procedures.”

Most health insurance plans have a deductible requirement – a predetermined amount of

healthcare expenses that must be covered before the plan begins paying the majority of, if not all, remaining expenses.

Rexroth stated it’s crucial to know how close you are to meeting your deductible – or if you’ve already met it “because once you reach that threshold, you have a limited window of opportunity to obtain healthcare services and have the bulk of that expense covered by your plan. Remember, a new year brings a new deductible.”

The close of 2019 also affects individuals who have FSAs, which are pre-tax dollars set aside primarily for health-related expenses. The Internal Revenue Service requires those funds to be spent – or forfeited – by Dec 31. It’s a “use it or lose it” proposition, stated Rexroth.

If you have been putting off scheduling care, such as

an annual check-up, allergy testing or knee replacement surgery, it would be wise to check your deductible status and your FSA balance to see if there’s money to be saved, stated Rexroth.

“It’s important to schedule services promptly so that there is enough time to have the test or elective procedure done before the end of the year. Getting everything squared-away by early December will help ensure the services you receive are considered part of your 2019 coverage,” she stated.

Every health plan is different. It is important to know how your plan works so you can get the most from your benefits. For questions about your plan, call your insurance provider.

To find a physician and/or schedule care, visit <https://lutheranhealthphysicians.com/Scheduling>.

Mereen-Johnson acquires Diehl Machines

STAFF REPORT

Minneapolis-based Mereen-Johnson, LLC announced Tuesday, Dec. 3 the acquisition of Diehl Machines, a Wabash-based manufacturer of industrial woodworking equipment, according to a press release.

“We believe the acquisition of Diehl Machines (allows us) to add a complementary line of products to our portfolio,” stated Paul Wilmes, CEO of Mereen-Johnson. “We also see great

potential for growth with new products and innovation from the Diehl line.”

Mereen-Johnson, founded in 1905, also manufactures a line of heavy-duty industrial production machinery, primarily geared to the wood industry, but increasingly used in the cutting of composites, plastics, aluminum and many other materials.

“Part of what drew us to Diehl was the high quality of the workforce in the Wabash area,” stated Wilmes.

“This is a great area and we look forward to growing here and being an active part of the community. ... Like Mereen-Johnson, Diehl has a history going back over 100 years and is well-known in the industry for manufacturing high quality, long-lasting machinery. As a result, we intend to keep the Diehl name on the line of products we are acquiring as well as develop plans for growing it in the future.”

DO JUST ONE THING

BY DANNY SEO

Are you sick or is someone ill with a cold or flu in your household? To help prevent the spread of germs, it’s important to disinfect household items that can harbor viruses on their surfaces. The top items include your phone, which is typically in constant contact,

because cold and flu viruses can last for days on the screens. Other common items include remote controls, bathroom and kitchen faucets, and towels, which should be cleaned in hot water. Wipe down door handles and computer keyboards, and wash all bedding once the sick person feels better.

Amazon says Trump’s ‘improper pressure’ doomed Pentagon bid

BY MATT O'BRIEN

and JOSEPH PISANI

Associated Press

Amazon says President Donald Trump’s “improper pressure” and behind-the-scenes attacks harmed its chances of winning a \$10 billion Pentagon contract.

The Pentagon awarded the cloud computing contract to Microsoft in October.

Amazon argues in a lawsuit unsealed Monday in the U.S. Court of Federal Claims that the decision should be revisited because of “substantial and pervasive errors” and Trump’s interference.

Amazon and its founder Jeff Bezos have been a frequent target of Trump, even before he became president. Bezos personally owns The Washington Post, which Trump has referred to as “fake news” whenever unfavorable stories are published about him.

Amazon said it lost the deal due to Trump’s “personal vendetta against Mr. Bezos, Amazon, and the Washington Post.”

Pentagon spokeswoman Elissa Smith said in a statement Monday the decision to select Microsoft “was made by an expert team of career public servants and military officers” and without external influence.

Formally called the Joint Enterprise Defense Infrastructure plan, or JEDI, the military’s computing project would store and process vast amounts of classified data. The Defense Department has said it will help speed up its war planning and fighting capabilities and enable the military to advance its use

of artificial intelligence.

Amazon and Microsoft became the finalists after Oracle and IBM were eliminated in an earlier round of the contract competition. Oracle had also sued, arguing the bidding was rigged in Amazon’s favor. Trump publicly waded into the bidding process over the summer, saying he heard complaints and wanted the Pentagon to take a closer look.

“The department is confident in the JEDI award and remains focused on getting this critical capability into the hands of our warfighters as quickly and efficiently as possible,” Smith said.

The White House didn’t immediately return an emailed request for comment Monday. Microsoft also didn’t immediately return a request for comment but is intervening in the court case to defend its contract win.

Charles Tiefer, a government contracting law professor at the University of Baltimore, said it would be “an uphill battle” for Amazon to win the lawsuit.

The company must prove real influence by the president beyond his tweets and campaign speeches. Emails and other documents would have to prove that Trump’s views toward Amazon were on the mind of officials in charge of awarding the contract.

“That’s hard to show,” Tiefer said. “But it’s not impossible.”

Amazon makes the case in the lawsuit that its cloud services were a better fit for the project because of its speed, efficiency and experience securely handling classified gov-

ernment data. It says the Defense Department made errors in the procurement process that make little sense without taking into account Trump’s antipathy toward Amazon. Some of the lawsuit’s details are redacted for proprietary or security reasons.

“Basic justice requires reevaluation of proposals and a new award decision,” the lawsuit says. “The stakes are high. The question is whether the President of the United States should be allowed to use the budget of DoD to pursue his own personal and political ends.”

Amazon Web Services has been the industry leader in moving businesses and other institutions onto its cloud – a term used to describe banks of servers in remote data centers that can be accessed from almost anywhere. But Microsoft’s Azure cloud platform has been steadily catching up, as have other providers such as Google, in both corporate and government settings.

Mike Hettinger, a tech industry lobbyist focused on federal contracting, said a strong case could have been made for either Amazon or Microsoft winning the contract but it is hard for an outside observer to know what went into the government’s technical evaluations and whether Trump’s comments or actions influenced the outcome. Amazon is likely to use the case to seek more internal documents from the government.

“I don’t think anybody knows what happened behind the scenes,” Hettinger said. “I think that’s what this lawsuit is intended to find out.”



Apaches repeat as Wabash County wrestling champions

The Wabash wrestling team earned its third consecutive Wabash County Tournament championship on Saturday at Northfield. County champions for the Apaches on the day were Jared Brooks at 113 pounds, Ethan Higgins at 120 pounds, Anthony Long at 126 pounds, Robert Barnett at 132 pounds, Brayden Sickafus at 145 pounds, Traydon Goodwin at 152 pounds, Grant Carandante at 160 pounds and Bryson Zapata at 170 pounds. County champions for Manchester were Dylan Stroud at 138 pounds and Ashton Moore at 195 pounds. For Southwood, the lone county champion was Aaliyah Douglass at 106 pounds.

Squires earn road win with strong fourth

The Manchester boys' basketball team traveled to Wawasee on Friday and came away with a 61-50 win. The Squires outscored the hosts 23-10 in the fourth quarter. Caleb Stout and Thane Creager each had 14 points while Weston Hamby had 13 and Max Carter 12.

Apaches drop close battle with Delta

On the road on Friday, the Wabash boys' basketball team fell to Delta 62-51. Trenton Daughtry led the team in scoring with 19 points while Elijah Vander Velden had 12 points. Dereck Vogel had eight points and 10 rebounds.

Knight lose TRC duel to Zebras

The Southwood girls' basketball team fell to Rochester on the road on Saturday, 70-47. After being tied at 20-20 to close the first, the hosts outscored the Knights 50-27 the remainder of the game. Erin Lehner had a 12 points and MaKenna Pace eight in the loss.

Vikings suffocate Apaches

The Wabash girls's basketball team fell to Tippecanoe Valley at home on Saturday, 49-25. The Apaches never scored more than eight points in any quarter on the night. Alivia Short had six points and six rebounds while Mariah Wyatt had five points and eight rebounds.

Emmanuel Christian falls on Friday The Emmanuel Christian basketball team fell to Kings Academy of Marion on Friday, 55-39. Riley Miller finished with 11 points and seven rebounds, JC Frank has nine points and six rebounds and Brogan Templin had eight points and five rebounds.

Submit your news

The Plain Dealer is accepting all news, varsity, junior varsity, middle school, elementary school and non-school affiliated recreational sports. Tltems may be: E-mailed to sports@wabashplaindealer.com. Called into 260-225-4523 after 11 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Please do not leave complete results on voice mail. Mailed into Plain Dealer, 123 W. Canal St., Wabash, IN 46992. Organizations or individuals e-mailing materials should call the sports department to ensure the information was received. The Plain Dealer reserves the right to edit material for length, clarity and/or style, and does not guarantee publication.

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL



DEFENSE: Northfield's Emma Hoover (left) surveys the field while Manchester's Emma Garriott (right) plays defense during the second half of Saturday's game.

Norse knock off Squires, continue win streak

BY JACOB RUDE
sports@wabashplaindealer.com
NORTH MANCHESTER — In each of Northfield's consecutive conference-winning seasons in the prior two years, the only team to knock off them off was county rivals Manchester. In fact, the Norse were 16-0 against the rest of the Three Rivers Conference and 0-2 against the Squires in that span. As a result, despite heavy graduations from both sides, Saturday's duel between the Squires and Norse carried a little extra weight than even just a Three Rivers Conference clash. But a 10-1 run from Northfield to open the game and a stingy defense that held the hosts Manchester to two points over a near-

ly 11-minute span in the second half carried the Norse to a 38-33 win on the night. "It's huge," Northfield head coach Melissa Allen said of the win. "This game, usually we're shooting about 18 percent and can't do anything right. Tonight, they came ready to play and got the win for us." The Norse flew out of the gates with a pair of Emma Hoover three-pointers sandwiched by layups from Addi Baker as part of a 10-1 run that forced a Squire timeout just over three minutes into the game. It was a run unlike any the Norse made in the two previous games against the Squires and something Allen called a deciding factor on the night.

"I think if that start wouldn't have happened, we probably wouldn't have won just because of the intensity part," she said. "Not the score but the intensity of the overall game. The girls knew they could do it. They just had to get it done." But even then, Manchester slowly crawled back into the game, tying the contest by halftime at 23-23 after scoring the final five points of the first half. Northfield flexed its defensive muscle in the second half, suffocating the Squires and allowing just two points in the third quarter, opening the margin up to 32-25. "That's everything I'm doing as a coach to try to help us," Manchester head coach Josh Troyer said of his side's

second-half struggles. "We watched a webinar last week to try to figure out some stuff to help in the second half. We got a couple of stops, we just didn't get the score. We've got starters that aren't looking for their shot and a team that needs to look for its shot. "We talked about being disciplined and I thought we were for the most part. It's just almost sometimes that discipline doesn't mean we're not shooting it at all," he added. "It just means you have to catch (the ball) ready and when it's a good shot, you take it. I thought we passed up some of those in the second half. And Northfield's a quality opponent."

See NORSE / Page B2

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

Viking size overwhelms Knights in loss

BY JACOB RUDE
sports@wabashplaindealer.com
HUNTINGTON NORTH — Huntington North and Southwood have long established themselves as a match-up of size versus speed. Friday's encounter was not only the same story but an exaggerated example of it. While Southwood forced the hosts into 25 turnovers that they turned into 18 points, the Vikings out-rebounded the guests by a staggering 44-11. In the end, it would be that size and rebounding battle that would win out, though just barely. Huntington North overcame a fourth-quarter deficit by limiting the Knights to just two points over the final 3:17 to come away with a 46-43 win. "It's incredible that we were able to be in the game because we didn't shoot a very good percentage," Southwood head coach John Burrus said. "When you throw that in you have to ask 'Well, how were we in it?' It was our defense. We forced 25 turnovers against Huntington North who, most of their games this year, they're going to have under 10. We got to credit our kid's defense. But you also have to credit Huntington North. They're a really good defensive team. They do a great

job of keeping you on the perimeter." The game of runs saw Southwood outscore the Vikings 15-7 in the third period before taking 35-33 lead to start the fourth. A flurry of baskets late in the fourth saw Dawson Filip give Southwood a 41-39 with a three-pointer before Dominic Cardwell tied the game at 41-41 after a pair of freebies. Baskets from Jordan Hollowell and Filip moved the score to 43-43 before Hollowell gave the Vikings a two-point lead with 60 seconds left. After draining the clock, the Knights would get an open look and a shot to take the lead on a Jackson Simons three-pointer with 12 seconds left but the shot bounced around the rim and out. Sam Thompson would leave the door open, though, as he split his pair of free throws on the other end after being fouled, leaving Southwood down 46-43. Carson Rich would get off a shot before the buzzer but his shot would hit front iron, allowing Huntington North to escape with the win. "I think a lot of it was Dom Cardwell on the boards," Huntington North head coach Craig Teagle said of how his team was able to



DRIBBLE: Southwood's Carson Rich brings the ball up-court during the fourth quarter of Friday's game at Huntington North.

See VIKINGS / Page B2

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Analysis: 4 enough for now to keep CFP expansion talk quiet

BY RALPH D. RUSSO
AP College Football Writer
COLUMBUS — College football always needs an argument when it comes to the postseason. This year, it was whether LSU or Ohio State should be the top seed in the four-team playoff. Four was enough this season to accommodate the teams worthy of a crack at the national championship. Maybe more than enough. Unlike last season, when Ohio State was left out with a legitimate case to be in the College Football Playoff. That sparked a month of posturing and chatter — mostly from Big Ten country — about expansion beyond four teams. The university presidents who oversee the CFP ended up saying, essentially: "We're good with what we got — for now." Playoff expansion is an evergreen topic in sports, always guaranteed to stir up debate. In years such as this, when things fall gently into place, with No. 1 LSU (13-0) facing No. 4 Oklahoma (12-1) and No. 2 Ohio State (13-0) playing No. 3 Clemson (13-0), the calls for a bigger field tend to be muted. But they don't go away. Expansion still seems inevitable, even though it has become apparent over the first six seasons of the playoff that it is just not needed to crown a deserving champion. "I think it's definitely something we should consider, not that it would be easy to play three more games," Ohio State coach Ryan Day said. "But I definitely think that we should consider taking the conference champs in the Power Five programs. I just think that's a cleaner way to do it. I know there's certain issues we would have to work through, not that now is the time to focus on those type of questions and thoughts." The time is getting closer. This season marks the halfway point of the 12-year contract the College Football Playoff struck with ESPN. There are separate agreements with each of the six bowls in the CFP rotation and three of those games have agreements with conferences that are separate from the playoff altogether. If the FBS commissioners who run the playoff — with the Power Five leaders having by far the most say — all decided they wanted to expand the field, it would take at least a year for them to figure how to do it. And it would have to be jammed into the current structure, from the bowls to the already set dates of the semifinals and championship games through the 2025 season. Indications are the brainstorming for expansion has already begun, somewhat informally and with no great urgency. "There's a lot that's right about the four-team playoff. I think one of the things we found, though, is that it's harder to be on the outside looking in than it was when it was just two teams," Big 12 Commissioner Bob Bowlsby said. "We're halfway through it and it's a good time to take

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SCOREBOARD

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

The Indiana Coaches of Girls Sports Association Top 10 basketball teams, with first-place votes in parentheses and previous rankings:

Class 4A				
	W-L	Pts	Pv	
1. Northwestern (Kokmo) (6)	9-0	105	2	
2. Lawrence North (3)	10-0	96	2	
3. Crown Point (1)	12-0	83	3	
4. Homestead (1)	7-0	76	4	
5. Fishers	11-0	71	5	
6. Hamilton Southeastern	8-1	50	6	
7. Penn	9-0	48	7	
8. Center Grove	9-1	32	8	
9. Brownsburg	7-2	15	9	
(tie) Jeffersonville	9-1	15	10	
Others receiving votes: North Central, West Lafayette Harrison, Mt. Vernon Fortville.				

Class 3A				
	W-L	Pts	Pv	
1. Salem (5)	7-0	103	2	
2. Gibson Southern (6)	7-0	99	1	
3. Benton Central	8-1	82	3	
4. Winchester	9-0	64	6	
5. Evansville Memorial	4-0	53	9	
6. Norwell	7-2	40	4	
(tie) Silver Creek	7-1	40	7	
8. Danville	6-1	31	10	
9. Greensburg	7-1	15	NR	
10. Ft. Wayne Luers	6-2	6	NR	
Others receiving votes: West Lafayette Central, Northwood, Boonville, Hamilton Heights, Mishawaka Marian, Vincennes Lincoln, Angola, South Bend St. Joseph's, Heritage Christian, Washington, Bellmont.				

Class 2A				
	W-L	Pts	Pv	
1. Triton Central (9)	9-0	99	1	
2. University (1)	9-0	89	3	
3. Vincennes Rivet	7-1	74	2	
4. Shenandoah	8-0	69	4	
5. Linton-Stockton	8-2	49	7	
6. Westville	10-0	37	T9	
7. S. Knox	9-1	35	T9	
8. N. Judson	5-2	23	T5	
9. Crawford Co.	9-3	20	NR	
10. Monroe Central	4-2	15	T5	
(tie) S. Central Union Mills	4-2	15	NR	
Others receiving votes: Lafayette Central Catholic, Lapel, Covenant Christian, Clinton Prairie, Forest Park, Eastern Pekin, Northeastern.				

Class 1A				
	W-L	Pts	Pv	
1. Loogootee 6)	6-1	98	1	
2. Oregon-Davis (2)	7-1	90	4	
3. Jac-Cen-Del (1)	7-1	83	2	
4. Trinity Lutheran (2)	6-1	73	5	
5. Tecumseh	5-2	60	3	
6. Morgan Twp.	7-2	51	6	
7. Lanesville	9-2	39	7	
8. Pioneer	6-1	29	10	
9. Greenwood Christian	5-2	20	9	
10. Kouts	6-2	19	8	
Others receiving votes: Union City, North Miami, Orleans, Springs Valley, Traders Point Christian Academy, Anderson Prep Academy, Edinburg, Bethesda Christian, Blue River Valley.				

NFL

AMERICAN CONFERENCE				
East				
New England	10	3	0	.769 338 168
Buffalo	9	4	0	.692 274 212
N.Y. Jets	5	8	0	.385 226 301
Miami	3	10	0	.231 221 399
South				
Houston	8	5	0	.615 317 309
Tennessee	8	5	0	.615 318 255
Indianapolis	6	0	0	.462 296 295
Jacksonville	4	9	0	.308 230 337
North				
x-Baltimore	11	2	0	.846 430 236
Pittsburgh	8	5	0	.615 259 242
Cleveland	6	7	0	.462 273 291
Cincinnati	1	12	0	.077 198 325
West				
y-Kansas City	9	4	0	.692 371 281
Oakland	6	7	0	.462 258 366
Denver	5	8	0	.385 236 361
L.A. Chargers	5	8	0	.385 289 251

NATIONAL CONFERENCE				
East				
Dallas	6	7	0	.462 334 267
Philadelphia	5	7	0	.417 274 284
Washington	3	10	0	.231 188 310
N.Y. Giants	2	10	0	.167 230 339
South				
y-New Orleans 10	3	0	0	.769 344 296
Tampa Bay	6	7	0	.462 378 381
Carolina	5	8	0	.385 300 360
Atlanta	4	9	0	.308 300 343
North				
Green Bay	10	3	0	.769 309 270
Minnesota	9	4	0	.692 339 249
Chicago	7	6	0	.538 243 232
Detroit	3	9	1	.269 287 335

West				
San Francisco	11	2	0	.846 397 229
Seattle	10	0	0	.769 341 321
L.A. Rams	8	5	0	.615 311 262
Arizona	3	9	1	.269 272 374
x-clinched playoff spot				
y-clinched division				
Thursday's Game				
Chicago 31, Dallas 24				
Sunday's Games				
Green Bay 20, Washington 15				
Minnesota 20, Detroit 7				
Atlanta 40, Carolina 20				
San Francisco 48, New Orleans 46				
Cleveland 27, Cincinnati 19				
Tampa Bay 38, Indianapolis 35				
Denver 38, Houston 24				
N.Y. Jets 22, Miami 21				
Baltimore 24, Buffalo 17				
L.A. Chargers 45, Jacksonville 10				
Tennessee 42, Oakland 21				
Kansas City 23, New England 16				
Pittsburgh 23, Arizona 17				
L.A. Rams 28, Seattle 12				
Monday's Game				
N.Y. Giants at Philadelphia				

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Bowl Glance				
Friday, Dec. 20				
Bahamas Bowl				
Buffalo (7-5) vs. Charlotte (7-5), 2 p.m. (ESPN)				
Frisco (Texas) Bowl				
Utah State (7-5) vs. Kent State (6-6), 7:30 p.m. (ESPN2)				
Saturday, Dec. 21				
Celebration Bowl				
At Atlanta				
NC A&T (8-3) vs. Alcorn State (9-3), Noon (ABC)				
New Mexico Bowl				
Albuquerque				
Central Michigan (8-5) vs. San Diego State (9-3), 2 p.m. (ESPN)				
Cure Bowl				
Orlando, Fla.				
Liberty (7-5) vs. Georgia Southern (7-5), 2:30 p.m. (CBSN)				
Boca Raton (Fla.) Bowl				
SMU (10-2) vs. FAU (10-3), 3:30 p.m. (ABC)				
Camellia Bowl				
Montgomery, Ala.				
FIU (6-6) vs. Arkansas State (7-5), 5:30 p.m. (ESPN)				
Las Vegas Bowl				
Boise State (12-1) vs. Washington (7-5), 7:30 p.m. (ABC)				
New Orleans Bowl				
UAB (9-4) vs. Appalachian State (12-1), 9 p.m. (ESPN)				
Monday, Dec. 23				
Gasparilla Bowl				
At Tampa, Fla.				
UCF (9-3) vs. Marshall (8-4), 2:30 p.m. (ESPN)				
Tuesday, Dec. 24				
Hawaii Bowl				
BYU (7-5) vs. Hawaii (9-5), 8 p.m. (ESPN)				
Thursday, Dec. 26				
Independence Bowl				
Shreveport, La.				
Miami (6-6) vs. Louisiana Tech (9-3), 4 p.m. (ESPN)				
Quick Lane Bowl, Detroit				
Pittsburgh (7-5) vs. Eastern Michigan (6-6), 8 p.m. (ESPN)				
Friday, Dec. 27				
Military Bowl				
Annapolis, Md.				
North Carolina (6-6) vs. Temple (8-4), Noon (ESPN)				
Pinstripe Bowl				
New York				
Wake Forest (8-4) vs. Michigan State (6-6), 3:20 p.m. (ESPN)				
Texas Bowl				
Houston				
Oklahoma State (8-4) vs. Texas A&M (7-5), 6:45 p.m. (ESPN)				
Holiday Bowl				
San Diego				
Iowa (9-3) vs. Southern Cal (8-4), 8 p.m. (FS1)				
Cheez-It Bowl				
Phoenix				
Air Force (10-2) vs. Washington State (6-6), 10:15 p.m. (ESPN)				
Saturday, Dec. 28				
Camping World Bowl				
Orlando, Fla.				
Notre Dame (10-2) vs. Iowa State (7-5), Noon (ABC)				

ON THE AIR

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

(MEN'S)
7 p.m.
ACCN: Detroit Mercy at Notre Dame
ESPN: Jimmy V Classic: Texas Tech vs. Louisville, New York
ESPN2: Maryland at Penn State
ESPNU: St. Joseph's at Temple
FS1: Brown at St. John's
9 p.m.
ESPN: Jimmy V Classic: Connecticut vs. Indiana, New York
ESPN2: Butler at Baylor
ESPNU: Nevada (Reno) at Brigham Young
PAC-12N: Northern Iowa at Colorado

NBA BASKETBALL

8 p.m.
TNT: Denver at Philadelphia
NHL HOCKEY
7:30 p.m.
NBCSN: St. Louis at Buffalo
RODEO
10 p.m.
CBSN: Pro Cowboys
Association: National Finals, Las Vegas
SOCCER (MEN'S)
12:55 p.m.
TNT: UEFA Champions League: Liverpool at Salzburg, Group E
3 p.m.
TNT: UEFA Champions League: Barcelona at Inter Milan, Group F

Cotton Bowl Classic
Arlington, Texas
Penn State (10-2) vs. Memphis (12-1), Noon (ESPN)
Peach Bowl
Atlanta
CFP Semifinal, LSU (13-0) vs. Oklahoma (12-1), 4 p.m. (ESPN)
Fiesta Bowl
Glendale, Ariz.
CFP Semifinal, Ohio State (13-0) vs. Clemson (13-0), 8 p.m. (ESPN)
Monday, Dec. 30
SERVPRO First Responder Bowl
Dallas
Western Kentucky (8-4) vs. Western Michigan (7-5), 12:30 p.m. (ESPN)
Music City Bowl
Nashville, Tenn.
Mississippi State (6-6) vs. Louisville (7-5), 4 p.m. (ESPN)
Redbox Bowl
Santa Clara, Calif.
Illinois (6-6) vs. California (7-5), 4 p.m. (FOX)
Orange Bowl
Miami Gardens, Fla.
Florida (10-2) vs. Virginia (9-4), 8 p.m. (ESPN)
Tuesday, Dec. 31
Belk Bowl
Charlotte, N.C.
Kentucky (7-5) vs. Finia Tech (8-4), Noon (ESPN)
Sun Bowl
El Paso, Texas
Florida State (6-6) vs. Arizona State (7-5), 2 p.m. (CBS)
Liberty Bowl
Memphis, Tenn.
Kansas State (8-4) vs. Navy (9-2), 3:45 p.m. (ESPN)
Arizona Bowl
Tucson, Ariz.
Wyoming (7-5) vs. Georgia State (7-5), 4:30 p.m. (CBSSN)
Alamo Bowl
San Antonio
Texas (7-5) vs. Utah (11-2), 7:30 p.m. (ESPN)
Wednesday, Jan. 1
Citrus Bowl
Orlando, Fla.
Michigan (9-3) vs. Alabama (10-2), 1 p.m. (ABC)
Outback Bowl
Tampa, Fla.
Minnesota (10-2) vs. Auburn (9-3), 1 p.m. (ESPN)
Rose Bowl
Pasadena, Calif.
Oregon (11-2) vs. Wisconsin (10-3), 5 p.m. (ESPN)
Sugar Bowl
New Orleans
Georgia (11-2) vs. Baylor (11-2), 8:45 p.m. (ESPN)
Thursday, Jan. 2
Birmingham (Ala.) Bowl
Cincinnati (10-3) vs. Boston College (6-6), 3 p.m. (ESPN)
Gator Bowl
Jacksonville, Fla.
Indiana (8-4) vs. Tennessee (7-5), 7 p.m. (ESPN)
Friday, Jan. 3
Famous Idaho Potato Bowl
Ohio (6-6) vs. Nevada (7-5), 3:30 p.m. (ESPN)
Saturday, Jan. 4
Armed Services Bowl, Fort Worth, Texas
Southern Miss (7-5) vs. Tulane (6-6), 11:30 a.m. (ESPN)
Monday, Jan. 6
Lendingtree Bowl
Mobile, Ala.
Miami (Ohio) (8-5) vs. Louisiana-Lafayette (10-3), 7:30 p.m. (ESPN)
Monday, Jan. 13
College Football Championship
New Orleans
Peach Bowl winner vs. Fiesta Bowl winner, 8 p.m. (ESPN)

College Football Playoff rankings
Record
1. LSU 13-0
2. Ohio St. 13-0
3. Clemson 13-0
4. Oklahoma 12-1
5. Georgia 11-2
6. Oregon 11-2
7. Baylor 11-2
8. Wisconsin 10-3
9. Florida 10-2
10. Penn St. 10-2
11. Utah 11-2
12. Auburn 9-3
13. Alabama 10-2
14. Michigan 9-3
15. Notre Dame 10-2
16. Iowa 9-3
17. Memphis 12-1
18. Minnesota 10-2
19. Boise St. 12-1
20. Appalachian St. 12-1
21. Cincinnati 10-3
22. Southern Cal 8-4
23. Navy 9-2
24. Virginia 9-4
25. Oklahoma St. 8-4
The playoff semifinals match the No. 1 seed vs. the No. 4 seed, and No. 2 will face No. 3.

Men's AP Top 25 Poll
The top 25 teams in The Associated Press' college basketball poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records through Dec. 8, total points based on 25 points for a first-place vote through one point for a 25th-place vote and last week's ranking:
Record
1. Louisville (55) 9-0 1591 1
2. Kansas (4) 7-1 1486 2
3. Ohio St. (5) 9-0 1464 6
4. Maryland 10-0 1428 3
5. Michigan 8-1 1286 4
6. Gonzaga 10-1 1235 9
7. Duke 9-1 1232 10
8. Kentucky 7-1 1170 8
9. Virginia 8-1 1060 5
10. Oregon 7-2 905 13
11. Baylor 7-1 872 18
12. Auburn 8-0 836 14
13. Memphis 8-1 756 15
14. Dayton 7-1 672 19
15. Arizona 9-1 654 12
16. Michigan St. 6-3 637 11
17. North Carolina 6-3 615 7
18. Butler 9-0 529 24
19. Tennessee 7-1 455 21
20. Villanova 7-2 285 23
21. Florida St. 8-2 253 17
22. Seton Hall 6-3 250 16
23. Xavier 9-1 216 10
24. Colorado 7-1 210 20
25. San Diego St. 10-0 197 —
Others receiving votes: Utah St. 160, Washington 144, Purdue 130, Indiana 13, Marquette 11, Liberty 9, Saint Mary's (Cal) 8, Texas 6, Florida 5, Penn St. 5, Georgetown 4, Richmond 3, West Virginia 3, LSU 2, DePaul 1, Duquesne 1, VCU 1.

AP Women's Top 25 poll
The top 25 teams in The Associated Press' women's college basketball poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records through Dec. 8, total points based on 25 points for a first-place vote through one

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Ohio St. jumps to No. 3 behind Louisville, Kansas in Top 25

BY DAVE SKRETTA
AP Basketball Writer

Louisville and Kansas finally provided some consistency to what has been a volatile Top 25 poll this season while perennial blue-bloods Michigan State and North Carolina continued to tumble after another wave of defeats.

The Cardinals solidified their place at No. 1 in the AP Top 25 released Monday after routing then-No. 4 Michigan in the ACC-Big Ten Challenge and breezing past Pittsburgh over the past week. The Jayhawks stayed at No. 2 after returning from their Maui Invitational title to thump former Big 12 member Colorado.

"I think it's two games in a row, where we got stops," Louisville coach Chris Mack said. "We didn't allow second shots. We ran the clock on offense. We got great looks. We got layups, and that's a killer."

Ohio State jumped from sixth to third following its 74-49 rout of then-No. 7 North Carolina and a blow-out of Penn State. Maryland dropped one spot to fourth despite continuing to pile up wins, while Michigan slid one spot to round out the top five after Juwan Howard's bunch ran into the Louisville buzzsaw for their first loss of

the season.

"There are always areas that you can improve on as a coach," Howard said. "I'll go back and look at film and evaluate and see areas we can counteract."

The Wolverines' in-state rivals have plenty of evaluation to do, too.

Michigan State was the preseason No. 1 after returning a bevy of talent from last year's Final Four team, led by star guard Cassius Winston. But after a season-opening loss to Kentucky in the Champions Classic, the Spartans lost to Virginia Tech and then fell to Duke last week to drop from 11th to No. 16 in the poll.

That drop wasn't nearly as startling as that of North Carolina, which tumbled 10 spots to No. 17 after losses to Ohio State and Virginia. The biggest culprit for the Tar Heels remains their offense, which failed to score at least 50 points in back-to-back games for the first time since the 1947-48 season.

"This is the most frustrated I've ever been," North Carolina coach Roy Williams said. "I don't think we're playing basketball the way that I want us to play and that is probably the most frustrating. Pushing the pace, sharing the ball, competing like crazy — I've

been very fortunate over the years, find the right buttons to push to get guys to do that and I haven't found the right buttons to push to get these guys to do it that way."

The Tar Heels catch a breather this week with their only game Sunday against Wofford. Then comes another big showdown against sixth-ranked Gonzaga next week.

"We got to try to get better later this week," Williams said. "That's not the way that, hopefully, I've tried to coach for 32 years but that's the way that we're playing right now so we have to get that changed."

RISING

The biggest climb this week belonged to Baylor, which jumped seven spots to No. 11 after edging then-No. 12 Arizona 63-58 to run its record to 7-1. The Bears have emerged as perhaps the biggest challenger to Kansas in the Big 12.

Sixth-ranked Gonzaga, No. 7 Duke and No. 10 Oregon each climbed three spots. Dayton continued its move up the rankings after its run to the Maui Invitational title game, moving up five spots to No. 14. Butler rose six spots to No. 18 after the Bulldogs beat Ole Miss and Florida.

FALLING

Arizona dropped three spots to No. 15, Florida State fell four spots to No. 21 and Seton Hall tumbled six spots to No. 22 after a loss to Iowa State. As if that wasn't bad enough for the Pirates, they also lost key contributor Sandro Mamukelashvili to a broken right wrist against the Cyclones.

MOVING IN

Xavier moved into the poll at No. 22 after wins over Green Bay and Cincinnati, and San Diego State made its debut at No. 25 after edging San Jose State to improve to 10-0 on the season.

MOVING OUT

Utah State was the first team out of the Top 25 after needing overtime to beat Fresno State last week. Washington also fell from No. 22 out of the poll after a loss to Gonzaga.

THIS WEEK

Many schools have a light week because of final exams, but some big games are on the docket. Butler visits Baylor on Tuesday night, while Oregon travels to Michigan, Memphis visits Tennessee and Gonzaga heads to Arizona on Saturday.

NFL

Colts will put Vinatieri on injured reserve with knee injury

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Indianapolis Colts kicker Adam Vinatieri will finish this season on injured reserve with an injured left knee.

The 46-year-old Vinatieri hopes his stellar career ends differently.

The Colts announced Monday that Vinatieri will have season-ending surgery for an injury he attempted to play through all season after first experiencing soreness in the knee at training camp.

Coach Frank Reich said team doctors had monitored Vinatieri throughout the season and that it didn't affect Vinatieri's performance at practice. And the NFL's career scoring leader repeatedly refused to say that the injury played any part in an uncharacteristic season in which he missed a league-high 14 kicks — six extra points and eight field goals.

Reich said when the knee flared up again last week, Vinatieri had a scan that revealed he needed

surgery.

Indy (6-7) claimed rookie kicker Chase McLaughlin off waivers last week. McLaughlin made all of his extra points and two of three field goals in Sunday's 38-35 loss at Tampa Bay. But he missed a 47-yarder in the fourth quarter.

Vinatieri has played in the fourth-most games in Colts history, trailing only Reggie Wayne, Peyton Manning and the Johnny Unitas.

In addition to holding the scoring record with 2,673 points, Vinatieri also holds the league record with 599 field goals made in his career.

The four-time Super Bowl champion is the third-oldest player to participate in a game and is the only player to top the 1,000-point mark with two teams.

And even though Vinatieri could become a free agent in March, Reich said Monday that Vinatieri hopes to play next season.

Sharks are circling around the Patriots

BY BARRY WILNER
AP Pro Football Writer

It might be freezing in New England. That won't stop the sharks from circling around Foxborough.

Criticism of the Patriots is more fair right now than usual. They have lost two in a row, not looking like a championship team in either defeat. For sure, at 42 Tom Brady has taken a step backward, which anyone who has won six Lombardi Trophies is entitled to.

And the air of invincibility at Gillette Stadium has been compromised severely by Kansas City. The Chiefs made enough mistakes to lose to a New York team, never mind to New England, yet escaped with what surely will be an uplifting victory for them.

Hey, Bill Belichick has been outcoached in all three of his team's defeats; yep, the Patriots are 10-3 even with all the doomsday gloom directed their way. Actually, if you examine his body of work real closely, you'll find enough examples of Belichick being outsmarted or off-kilter, including in Super Bowls lost and won.

We're sure to hear very loud proclamations this week of the Patriots being done. We've heard and read such evaluations before, including when they went 11-5 in 2018 — all the losses were on the road — and had to play the AFC championship game in Kansas City.

Let's not jump to conclusions just yet.

"I don't want to make any predictions," Brady said after the 23-16 loss that pushed the Patriots basically two games behind Baltimore (11-2 with a win against New England) in the overall AFC scheme. "I don't think that's — I think we come in with a plan to get better every week and try to win each game. Each game takes on a little different feel and the situations are a little different, and it's a different team every year, too.

"So, I may have certain experience doing things, but this particular team as a whole hasn't been through different situations. So, you just try to work through them over the course of the whole season, and we have three big games to go, and we've got to get back to winning football."

That figures to happen next week at Cincinnati, yet another weak opponent on this year's schedule.

The Patriots really have faced only three strong teams at the times they met — Buffalo, Baltimore and Houston — and lost two of those games. They take on the Bills in their 15th game and, could it be, actually could lose the AFC East for the first time in who can remember should they drop that one.

Then again, they could win out, which is more likely, and get at least a first-round playoff bye. The AFC is weak enough that division winners can feast on the weaklings and make the postseason no matter how they fare against the better teams.

What should concern Brady and company is that opponents aren't likely to fear them, even in Foxborough, this winter. We already know from past experiences that the Ravens don't; there isn't another team or coach that carries more swagger into the Patriots' home than Baltimore and John Harbaugh.

Buffalo, even in its loss Sunday to the Ravens, showed a ton of moxie it would do well to bottle for its trip to New England. Houston, even with its monumental flop Sunday at home against Denver after seemingly getting over the hurdle it kept stumbling on against the Patriots, has to be emboldened should it face the Patriots in January.

Certainly the Chiefs will be. No, they aren't as strong as last year — the defense is better but possibly not improved enough to make a Super Bowl, and the offense is imbalanced. That shouldn't diminish the significance of Sunday's victory.

What surely is fair is to look at is the NFC and recognize that New Orleans, San Francisco, Seattle and Green Bay are formidable. And, yes, we'll say it right here, all of them are better than the Patriots at this time.

San Francisco took huge steps in a tight loss at Baltimore and then in this weekend's victory at New Orleans, a game to rival Seahawks-49ers of last month for best game of the season. Seattle, despite its loss at the Rams, is capable of outplaying and outmuscling anyone. The Packers have as much balance as anyone. Oh yeah, they also have Aaron Rodgers.

What do the Patriots have? Lots of maneaters ready to pounce. Can they fend them off yet again?

MLB

Union executive Marvin Miller, Simmons elected to Hall of Fame

BY RONALD BLUM
AP Baseball Writer

SAN DIEGO — Marvin Miller, the union leader who revolutionized baseball by empowering players to negotiate multimillion-dollar contracts and to play for teams of their own choosing, was elected to baseball's Hall of Fame on Sunday along with former St. Louis Cardinals catcher Ted Simmons.

After falling short in his first seven times on veterans committee ballots, Miller received 12 of 16 votes from this year's 16-man modern committee, exactly the 75% required. Simmons was on 13 ballots, and former Boston outfielder Dwight Evans was third with eight.

Miller, who died at age 95 in 2012, led the Major League Baseball Players Association from 1966-82, a time when players gained the right to free agency after six seasons of big league service, to salary arbitration and to grievance arbitration. He led the union through five work stoppages and was an adviser during three more after he retired.

Miller and Simmons will be inducted into Cooperstown during ceremonies on July 26 along with any players chosen next month by the Baseball Writers' Association of America from a ballot headed by former New York Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter.

After several turndowns, Miller had asked not to be considered for the Hall, calling the process "a farce." He asked his children not to participate and his son, Peter Miller, confirmed in an email to The Associated Press that planned to not attend the in-

duction.

"It would have been a great honor 20 years ago," Miller's daughter Susan said in a telephone interview with the AP.

Simmons, involved in a high-profile contract dispute in 1972, recalled how Miller united a disparate group of players.

"Marvin would patiently wait for every single player to speak their mind," Simmons said. "No matter how inane, no matter how unthought out, no matter how off the mark the question came, Marvin painstakingly, patiently waded through it all. And in the end, after everyone had spoke their mind, he would bring it all together and present it in a way that everyone felt as though, yes, this is exactly what we collectively think."

Simmons, an eight-time All-Star during a 21-year big league career, was a switch-hitter who batted .285 with 248 homers and 1,389 RBIs for St. Louis (1968-80), Milwaukee (1981-85) and Atlanta (1986-88).

Despite his accomplishments, Simmons was up for election by voters from the BBWAA just once. He drew only 3.7 percent support in 1994 and was removed from future BBWAA ballots.

Miller will be inducted 12 years after Bowie Kuhn, the baseball commissioner Bowie Kuhn whom Miller routinely defeated in labor negotiations, and three years after Bud Selig, the commissioner who in 1994-95 presided over the longest work stoppage in baseball's history.

"The Hall of Fame is called the Hall of Fame and Museum. Imagine a museum of baseball without Marvin

Miller in it?" former union chief operating officer Gene Orza said. "It's like having a museum of modern art without Picasso in it. I guess I'm happy for all the people who are happy. But I don't think Marvin would lose any sleep one way or the other over this."

In 2008, four years before he died, Miller sent a letter to the BBWAA saying he didn't want to be considered anymore.

"He repeatedly reaffirmed that wish during his lifetime, as well as his intention not to participate in any HOF activity if elected," Peter Miller wrote in an email to the AP. "He requested that I do likewise, and I'm sure all his well-wishers will understand that I am bound to honor his wishes. So the HOF results this year change nothing."

Peter Miller called baseball free agency "an integral part of the story of American freedom" and said a reception in his father's honor will be held at National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C., on April 22, to mark the display of a photograph of his father.

Players averaged \$19,000 in 1967, when the union first started calculating, and just over \$240,000 during Miller's final year. The average is now over \$4 million.

"He gave players freedom and money that has made the game better for everyone," Hall of Fame catcher Johnny Bench tweeted.

Miller received 44% of the votes in 2003 and 63% in 2007 when all Hall of Famers could participate on a veterans panel. After the Hall downsized the veterans committees, he got three of 12 votes later in 2007 from

a committee considering executives that elected Kuhn.

"I am surprised," said Donald Fehr, the union's head from 1983-2009. "I have long thought that eventually academics if no one else would create the necessary momentum to rectify the omission, rectify the wrong. I'm glad to see that they have bestowed that recognition. It's long overdue and immensely deserved."

Miller got seven of 12 votes in 2009 and then, when the format was changed again, he got 11 of 16 from an expansion era committee in 2010 — falling one vote short. He received six votes or fewer of 16 in 2013 and seven of 16 from the new modern era committee in 2017.

"Players are pleased that Marvin will now take his rightful and long overdue place in the Hall of Fame in recognition of the monumental and positive impact he had on our game and our industry," current union head Tony Clark said in a statement.

Nicknamed Simba for his shoulder-length hair, Simmons was an outspoken opponent of President Richard Nixon and the Vietnam War. In the days before free agency, he played much of the 1972 season without a contract because of a pay dispute, finally agreeing to a two-year deal in late July.

Now 70, Simmons received 17 of 456 votes in 1994, falling shy of the 5% threshold to remain on the ballot. Simmons was on 11 of 16 ballots when the modern era committee met in 2017 and elected Jack Morris with 14 votes and Alan Trammell with 13.

CFF

Continued from B1

a look at it. But I wouldn't jump to any conclusions on it. I just think we'll take a look at what's right about it. Take a look at the ways it might be improved and see where it gets to."

Even the guy who should be leading the charge toward expansion, Pac-12 Commissioner Larry Scott, whose league has been left out four times in six seasons, doesn't appear to be in any hurry.

"We're coming off two years where we did not make the playoff," Scott

said Friday night before Oregon beat Utah in the Pac-12 championship game to ensure it would be three straight. "Absolutely helped shape a perception that the conference was down. I think we've all seen this is a year where the conference has been stronger top to bottom, including elite teams in the hunt for the playoff at the business end of the season. Yeah, these are important milestones."

A funny thing has happened since the start of the playoff: Double the number of teams enter the postseason with an chance to win the national championship

compared with the Bowl Championship Series days, but the number of teams truly capable of winning it all has not changed.

In five years, there have been three champions: Alabama and Clemson twice and Ohio State once. Add in Oklahoma and those four teams have taken 17 of the 24 playoff bids over six seasons.

Four is enough to determine the best team in college football. There is certainly a desire among some fans for expansion, but the outcry is not nearly as loud as it was with the BCS.

Expanding the field will be mostly about growing

the sport, which is a polite way of saying making more money. It's not just television revenue that would increase with more playoff games. A bigger field would make more teams contenders to simply get in. Just as expanded playoffs in professional sports are designed to keep more fans engaged throughout the season, so too would an eight-team field in college football.

Automatic bids for at least Power Five champions would take a lot of the subjectivity out of the process.

But for now, it's four — and this year that was enough to keep those clamoring for expansion quiet.

Oldest employee gets more night shifts than colleagues

DEAR ABBY: I work in a small office with five other people. Due to the nature of our business, we work various shifts throughout the day.

I am the oldest employee, and when it comes to our schedule, I feel discriminated against. I usually get four night shifts and one day shift a week. Everyone else gets one night shift and the rest daytime shifts.

The lead technician is the one who arranges our schedule. If I ask her about it, she tells me she has no one else or some similar excuse when I know she easily can change things to make it more fair. I am not one of her "buddies," probably because I'm at least 20 years older than the rest.

I just get very frustrated every time I see my new schedule. Even the part-time people get better hours than I do. Is this discrimination? — Wondering In Iowa

DEAR WONDERING: Did you fill out a form listing your availability as open or flexible? If so, modify it. If you truly feel you are being discriminated against because of your age, talk to your supervisor's boss about it. And if things are not made more equitable, consider reporting it to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

DEAR ABBY: I am asking for advice about our daughters-in-law. We have two sons whose wives want to spend every holiday with their parents, period. No alternating holidays. This means my husband and I spend the holidays alone, then "get" to have a get-together at a date and time convenient for them.

I know our sons are partly at fault, but they are trying to keep peace in their lives. Any suggestions would be appreciated. One daughter-in-law used the excuse that her grandfather is 99 and may not be around forever, to which I replied that I'm 70 and NONE of us know how long we have.

We raised our daughter to respect her in-laws as well as us, and she alternates holidays. Please help with this, Abby. — Missing Out In Texas

DEAR MISSING OUT: This happens in many families. I wish I could wave a magic wand and turn your daughters-in-law into less-insensitive, more-caring people, but I can't. Your sons are more than "partly" at fault for not insisting on fairness. Because they're not assertive, the most pragmatic suggestion I can offer is that you make plans of your own for the holidays that don't include them — the nicest your budget allows.

DEAR ABBY: Please do not reveal my location if you print this. I live in a small town and am part of a club that meets monthly. We are less than a dozen gals who discuss a book or politics. I know they all socialize with each other. With one exception, I have never been invited.

That said, we have different interests outside the club. They are smart, fun, loving women. However, I have felt that on more than one occasion, a comment was directed at me that I am not welcomed. I have been told, "Don't take it personally." Should I? How do I address this? — Hurt In The West

DEAR HURT: This book club should not be your only social activity. Surely you have other interests, as these women do. If you felt a comment was made that caused you to feel unwelcome, the appropriate response would have been to say, "Would you please clarify that comment?" Or even, "My feelings are hurt. Why would you say that?"

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Dear Abby



CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Tint
- 4 Brass component
- 8 London's Old —
- 11 Alert color
- 12 Vintage
- 13 MSN rival
- 14 Mr. McEwan
- 15 Black-and-white whales
- 16 Give — shot
- 17 Tomb builder
- 19 Singapore's language
- 21 — and outs
- 22 Pop's companion
- 23 Boring situations
- 26 Banishing
- 30 Feels under par
- 31 Trimmed
- 32 Maude
- 33 Ms. Hagen
- 34 Finish a cake
- 35 Lumpy fruit
- 36 Not worthy of

DOWN

- 39 LV
- 40 Go for the gold
- 41 Novelist — Beattie
- 42 Fruity drink
- 45 Cleaning fluid
- 49 Poetic tribute
- 50 Film's dom's
- 52 Tibetan gazelle
- 53 Grassy expanse
- 54 Love affair
- 55 Decompose
- 56 Klutz
- 57 "Forrest —"
- 58 Coast Guard off.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

C	H	I	P	E	D	Y	R	E	A	D
S	A	G	A	W	E	E	A	L	P	O
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SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

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	9			4			2	
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4	5			3	8			1
7	6	3	4	1		5		
2			9			4		

12/9

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How to play:

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9.

PREVIOUS SOLUTION

7	4	8	1	9	5	2	6	3
1	5	3	7	2	6	8	4	9
2	9	6	3	8	4	1	5	7
6	3	4	5	1	8	9	7	2
9	7	2	6	4	3	5	8	1
8	1	5	9	7	2	6	3	4
5	6	7	2	3	9	4	1	8
3	8	9	4	5	1	7	2	6
4	2	1	8	6	7	3	9	5

JUMBLE

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

MISYL

□ □ □ □ □

DUGEN

□ □ □ □ □

CIDPET

□ □ □ □ □

RANSIP

□ □ □ □ □

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□ □ □ □ □

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



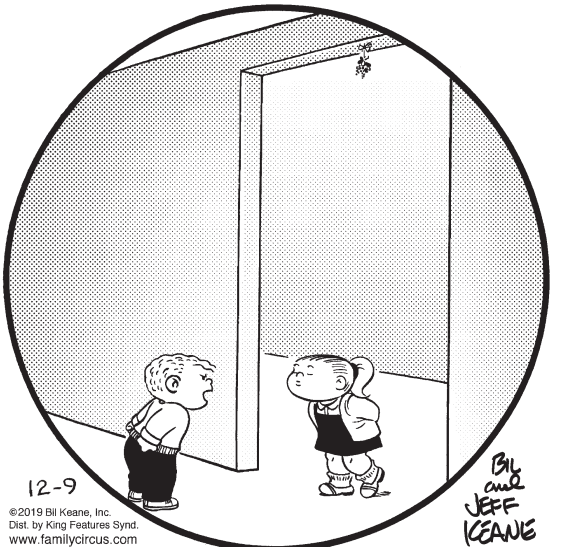
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

HIS □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □
(Answers tomorrow)
Saturday's Jumbles: SIGHT TIPSY SMOOTH PIRATE
Answer: The construction of the staircase wasn't going well because of all the — MISSTEPS

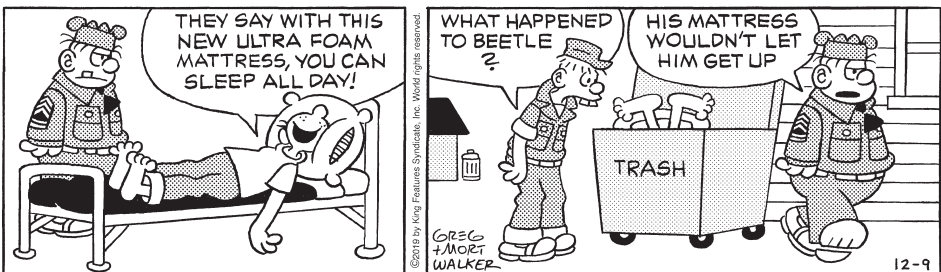
THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane

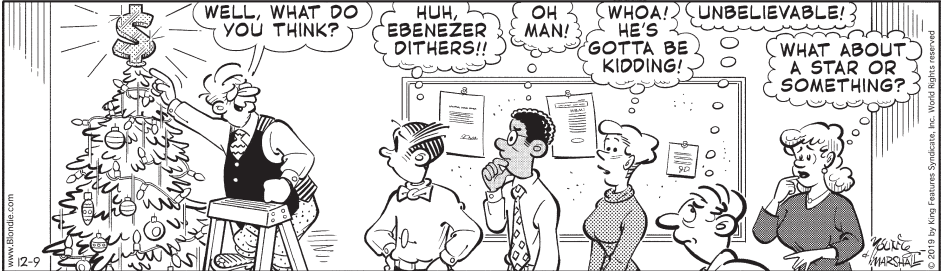


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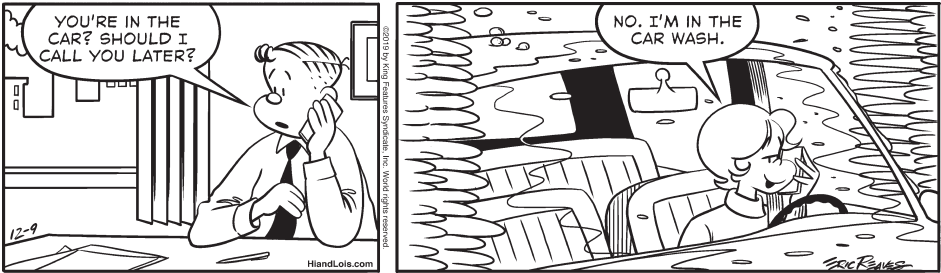
BEETLE BAILEY



BLONDIE



HI & LOIS



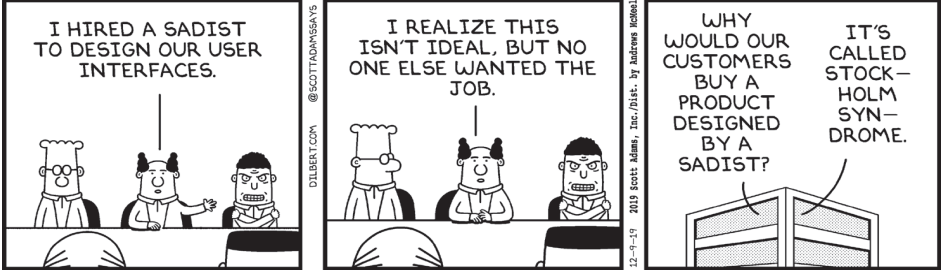
BC



WIZARD OF ID



DILBERT



GARFIELD



FORT KNOX



PICKLES



Man's standard falls short of God's plan for mankind

From the writings of the Rev. Billy Graham

Q: What does the Bible mean when it says that people are dead in trespasses and sins? — S.A.

A: The Bible speaks of the things of the world that blind people to spiritual truth (2 Corinthians 4:4). Until men and women submit to the Lord Jesus Christ, they are spiritually dead. They do not understand the truth of the Bible. They may quote it, they may even say they believe it; but when it does not change their life, when it does not lead them to obedience, they are spiritually dead.

This means that the communication between God and man is broken. There is a wonderful world of joy, light, harmony, peace, and satisfaction to which millions of people are blind and deaf — dead. They long for serenity, they

search for happiness, but they seem never to find it. Often their despondency leads to frantic experimentation with alcohol, narcotics, immorality, defiance of authority, rebellion, etc. This only leads to a sin-blighted existence. All the while God is there speaking and beckoning.

Many people are interested in what God has to say perhaps out of curiosity. They want to analyze His message according to their standard. To such people, God may remain the great cosmic silence. Man's standard falls short of God's plan for mankind. He

has communicated His message of forgiveness and love to those who are willing to hear and receive His Word, and then obey it. We must humble ourselves before Him.

This is exactly what happened to Adam and Eve. When they realized their sin and their shame, they knew they had fallen short of His standard. The all-knowing God knew the heart of man and He devised a way to bring man back into a full relationship by building a bridge. That bridge is the Lord Jesus Christ, God's one and only Son.

CELEBRITY CIPHER

Celebrity Cipher cryptograms are created from quotations by famous people, past and present. Each letter in the cipher stands for another.

"IGN EHENUIX IGJI EJBNTRON LHWIG
TRKRUP JWN LGNU IGRUPX JWN JI
IGNRW LHWXJ JUV SHC ORUV J LJS IH
TJCPG." — JES XAGCENW

Previous Solution: "The inescapable price of liberty is an ability to preserve it from destruction." — Gen. Douglas MacArthur

TODAY'S CLUE: K S I B N B E

Mom weighs bringing defiant daughter on family vacation

DEAR ABBY: One of our daughters (18) has been re-belling for the last couple of years. She's not doing well in community college. She is dating a drug user and has been caught in lie after lie, including about spending the night at friends' homes.

Dear Abby



She has now decided she no longer wants to live with our rules, which include staying enrolled in college full time and making progress, doing a few household chores, telling us where she is going and when we can expect her home, and having no over-nighters. She has moved out and in with a friend.

We know she's immature and will grow up eventually. We are heartbroken but understand we can't control this. We are praying for her safety.

We have an out-of-town wedding coming up and have decided to make a family vacation out of it. On one hand, we want to include her, not wanting to destroy what little relationship we have. On the other, we do not want to be "used" for a fun vacation. Because she has chosen to live on her own as an adult, she must pay her own way (which she can't afford). Should we take her or not? – Mom Of An Almost-Adult

DEAR MOM: Your daughter has made a choice – to be out from under your thumb and on her own. The "price" for her independence is being unable to depend upon you and your husband to foot the bill for her expenses.

Would she be running wild and staying out all night if you take her with you? You would have to set some rules beforehand and get her to agree to abide by them if she is going to be included with her sibling(s). A positive experience as a family may be what you all need right now. But only you can decide whether it's worth taking the chance.

DEAR ABBY: I am recently divorced, but my husband, "Danny," and I still see each other. The other night he mentioned that his ex-girlfriend texts him. He also allows her to follow him on Instagram but says he isn't following her. It really bothers me because she and Danny were in contact when we were married, "just as friends" is what he said. He repeated with 100% certainty that he has no interest in ever getting back together with her.

I spend a lot of nights at his place, and he spends nights with me, so I guess I have to trust his word, but it's eating me up inside. I have asked him to not allow her to follow him on Instagram, but he has not done that yet. He said he doesn't care who follows him. – Unfollow In Connecticut

DEAR UNFOLLOW: I'm confused. Exactly what is your question? You say you are divorced, but you are still acting – and thinking – like you are Danny's wife. He's a free man now, and you not only do not have the right to dictate who should or shouldn't follow him on Instagram, but also don't have the right to tell him he can't see another woman if he wishes.

Face it, you are BOTH free now. You can't be cheated on by a husband who is no longer your husband. Consider this: It might be healthier for you to spend less time with Danny and devote more time to moving forward with your life.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

CROSSWORD

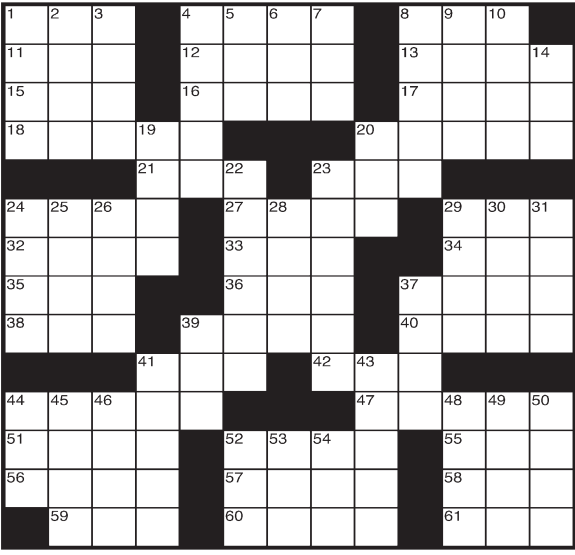
ACROSS

- 1 Pursue
- 4 Bankrolls
- 8 Bedwear, briefly
- 11 Part of GPA
- 12 Fossey's friends
- 13 Gospel writer
- 15 Born as
- 16 Brain division
- 17 Single entity
- 18 Stair part
- 20 Overact
- 21 Seed container
- 23 Woof
- 24 Circular object
- 27 Borodin prince
- 29 Web addr.
- 32 Give off light
- 33 Bam!
- 34 Fem. saint
- 35 Mae West role
- 36 Good buddy
- 37 Air show formations
- 38 High pts.
- 39 Solar plexus

DOWN

- 1 Feel like
- 2 In charge of
- 3 Curved molding
- 4 Hard guy to find
- 5 GI address
- 6 Chap- oned girl
- 7 Compass dir.
- 8 Chubby
- 9 Jupiter's wife
- 10 Short play
- 14 Summer in Cannes
- 19 Dr.'s visit
- 20 Play it by —
- 22 Served ice cream
- 23 Cried out in pain
- 24 Mr. Sulu's place
- 25 Ignore
- 26 Greases
- 28 Horned animal
- 29 Employs
- 30 Road map nos.
- 31 For fear that
- 37 Urn
- 39 Bleacher shout
- 41 Fall guy
- 43 Husband of Medea
- 44 Mexican Mrs.
- 45 Non-soap opera
- 46 Latitude
- 48 Happy
- 49 Hawkeye State
- 50 Hurried
- 52 Realty unit
- 53 Before now
- 54 Always, in poems

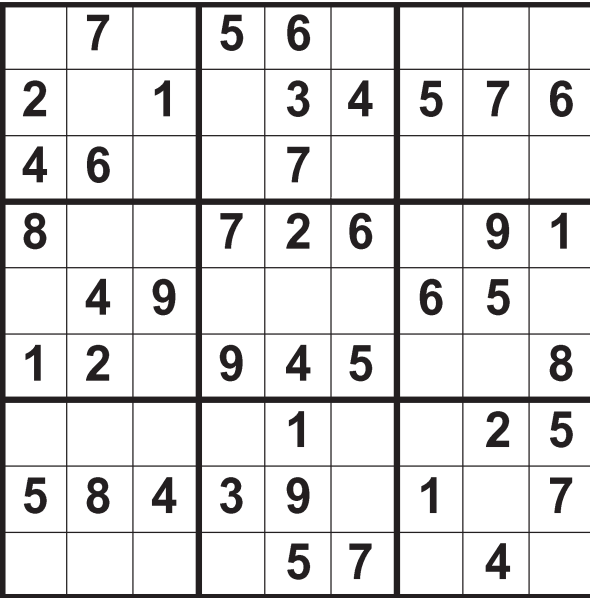
Answer to Previous Puzzle



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SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆



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How to play:

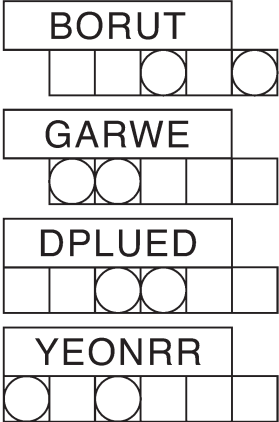
Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9.

PREVIOUS SOLUTION

5	1	2	8	7	4	3	6	9
9	4	7	5	6	3	2	8	1
6	3	8	2	9	1	7	5	4
3	7	6	1	2	9	8	4	5
8	9	5	3	4	7	1	2	6
1	2	4	6	8	5	9	3	7
4	5	9	7	3	8	6	1	2
7	6	3	4	1	2	5	9	8
2	8	1	9	5	6	4	7	3

JUMBLE

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

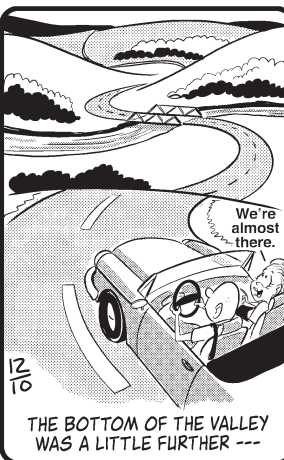


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Answer here: [grid]

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

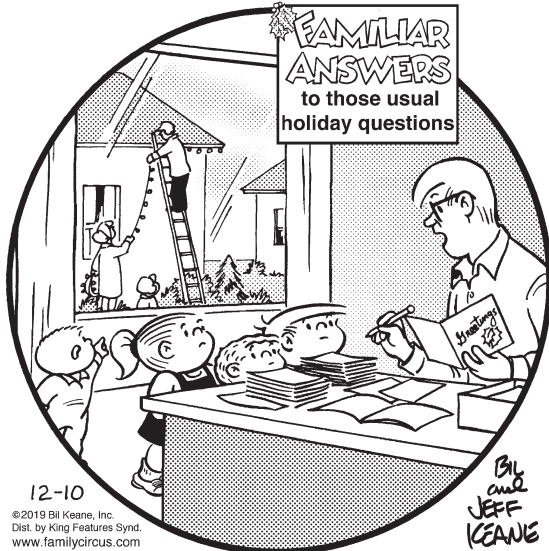
THE [grid]

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: SLIMY NUDGE DEPICT SPRAIN Answer: The rain made it hard for the ghost to haunt people, but it didn't — DAMPEN HIS SPIRIT

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

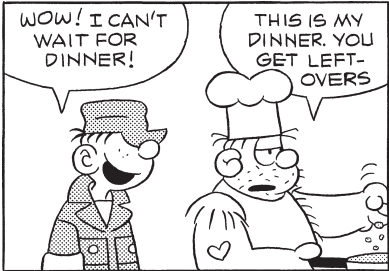
By Bil Keane



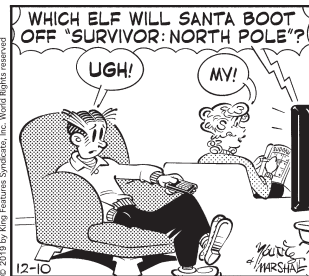
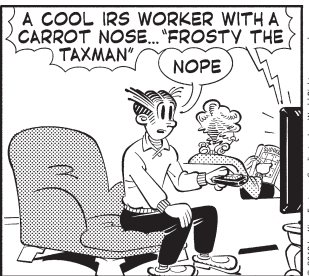
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"We'll put 'em up NEXT weekend — I have too much to do right now."

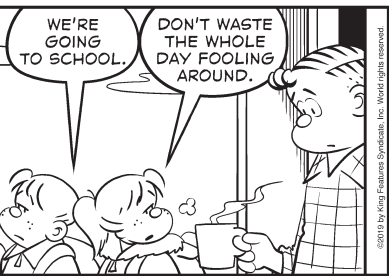
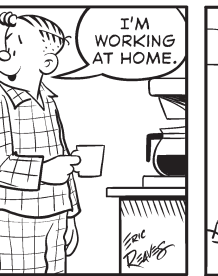
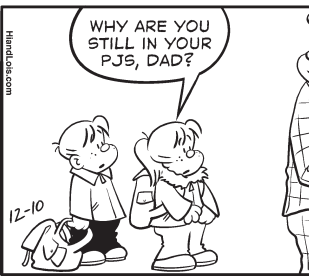
BEEBLE BAILEY



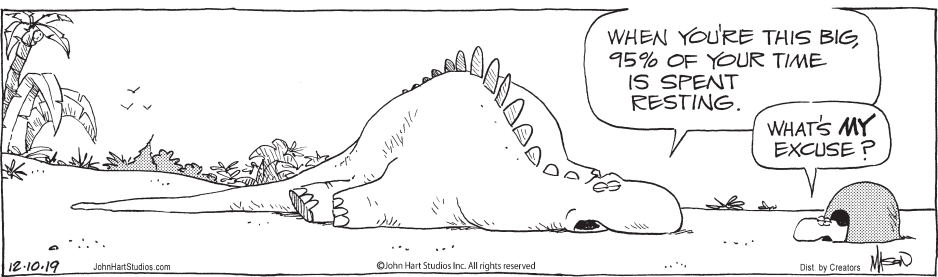
BLONDIE



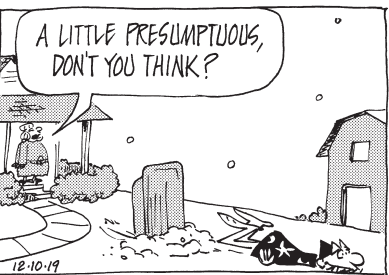
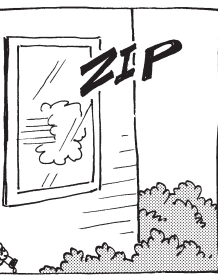
HI & LOIS



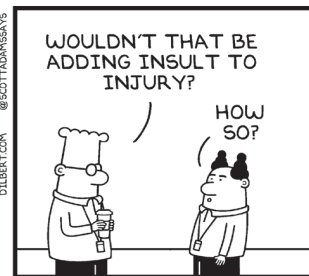
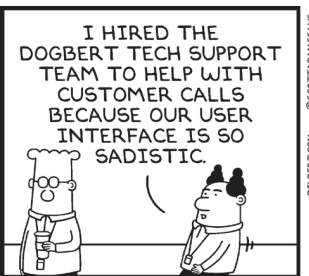
BC



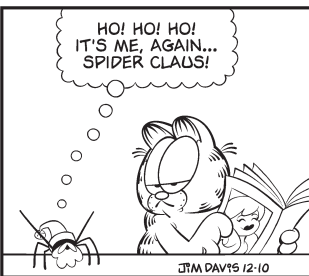
WIZARD OF ID



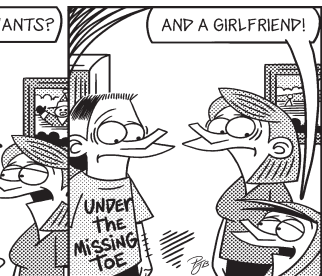
DILBERT



GARFIELD



FORT KNOX



PICKLES



Dirty appetites becoming principle satisfaction of life

From the writings of the Rev. Billy Graham

Q: Sexual obsession is destroying our nation and way of life. Society is throwing out the Ten Commandments to make room for vulgarity in every form. Why can't our society see this destruction and stop calling it freedom of speech? — S.S.

A: Western society has become so obsessed with sex that it seeps from all the pores of our national life. No longer is it covered in brown paper and stashed in back of the checkout counter.

Today, freedom of speech implies the freedom to corrupt the minds of the people, inciting every form of sexual perversion. There've been laws forbidding open sewers and cesspools so there should be laws forbid-

ding pornography and obscenity, but people stumble over the definition of the word "obscenity." If we cannot agree on the length of a foot, it is because we have lost our yardstick. No one has ever improved upon the moral yardstick given to man in the Ten Commandments. We have changed our moral code to fit our behavior instead of changing our behavior to harmonize with God's moral code.

Pornography is anything that depicts lewdness in such a way as to create impure thoughts and lusts.

However, the sewers continue to flow, destroying the moral fabric of our society. No one can deny that dirty appetites are becoming the principle satisfaction of life.

Just because society says that immorality is a form of freedom of speech does not make it right. The Ten Commandments are just as valid today as they were when God gave them, and God is watching and listening, and one day He will bring judgment. May those who follow Him continue to stand on the Word of God, for it leads to right living.

CELEBRITY CIPHER

by Luis Campos

Celebrity Cipher cryptograms are created from quotations by famous people, past and present. Each letter in the cipher stands for another.

"SIK GHNDKKJYMW YH NCVH HGLGWK IYNXGZ NCGN OXHN IKFYMJH TVX NCGN TVXI SVJT YH G PGDKNKIYG MVE." — GZY EVMW

Previous Solution: "The moments that make life worth living are when things are at their worst and you find a way to laugh." — Amy Schumer

TODAY'S CLUE: A sgenbe 7

